COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEW: COLORADO #1

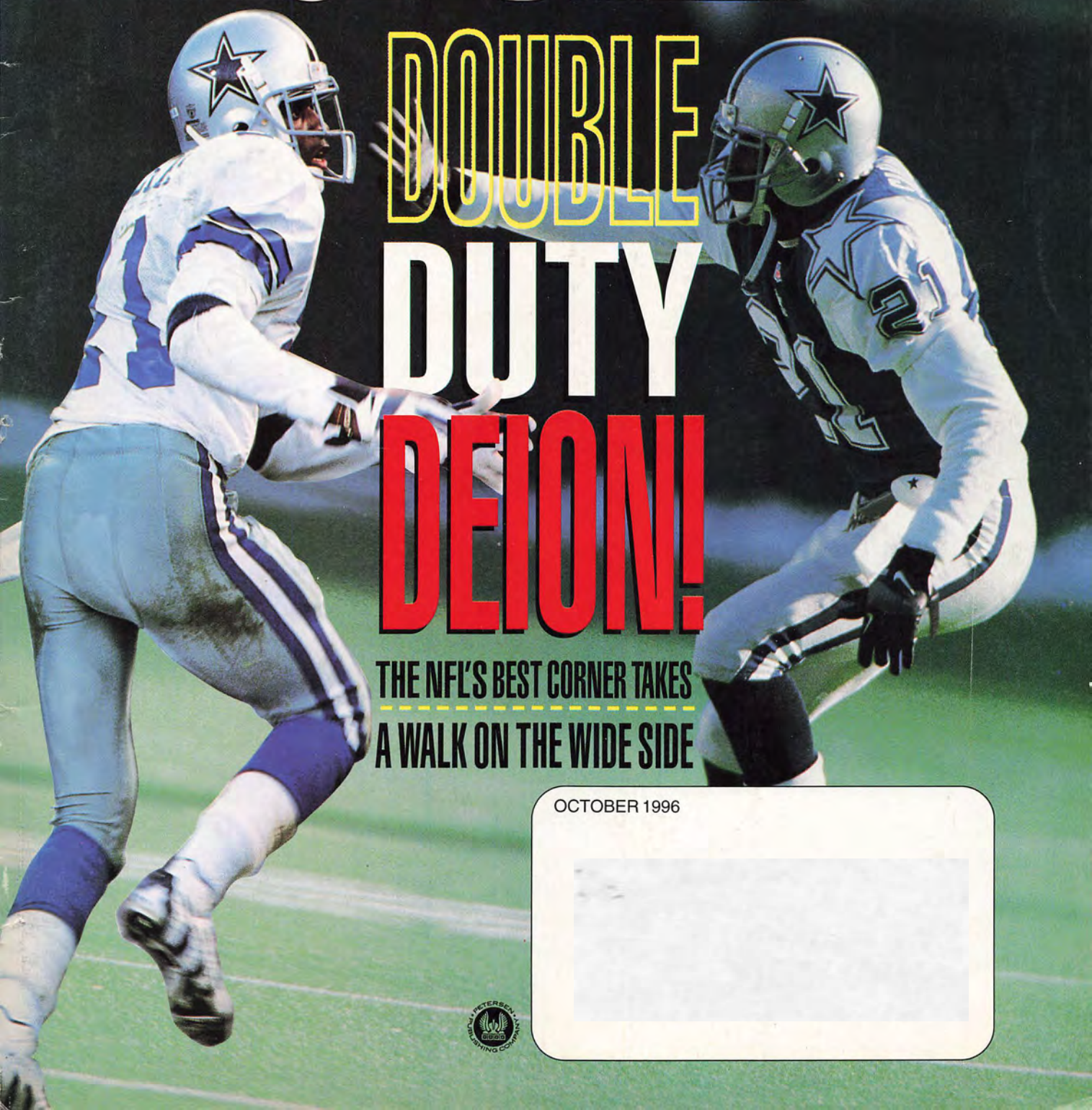
SPORT

HANG TIME: BARRY BONDS

RUNNING WITH RICKY WATTERS

KEYSHAWN HITS THE BIG APPLE

TONY PHILLIPS: ALL THE RAGE



DOUBLE DUTY DEION!

THE NFL'S BEST CORNER TAKES A WALK ON THE WIDE SIDE

OCTOBER 1996

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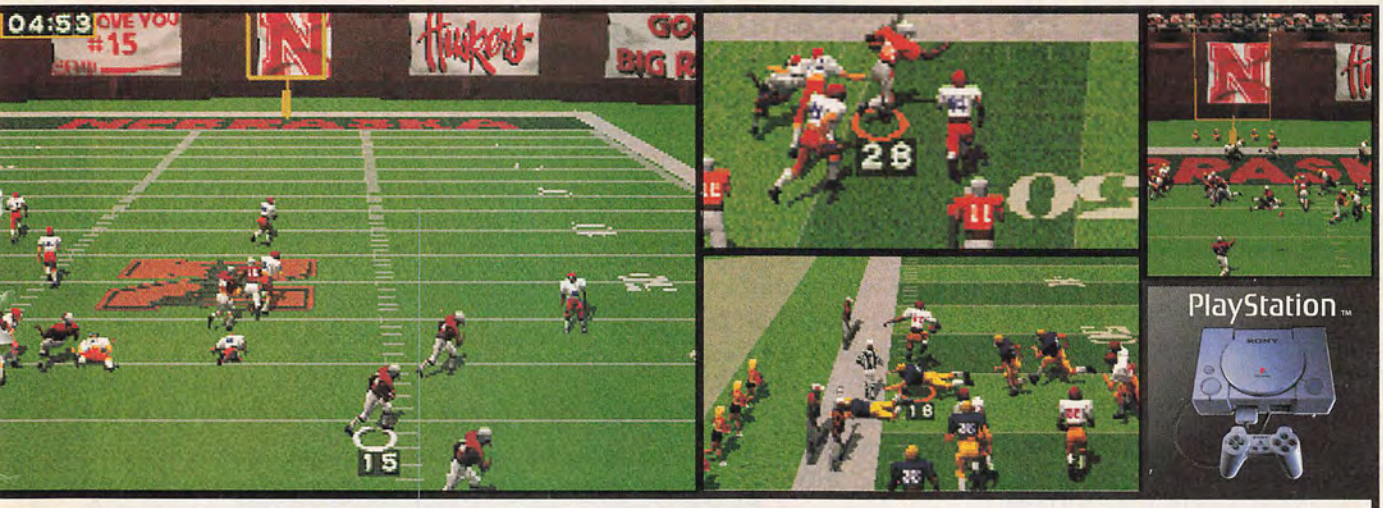

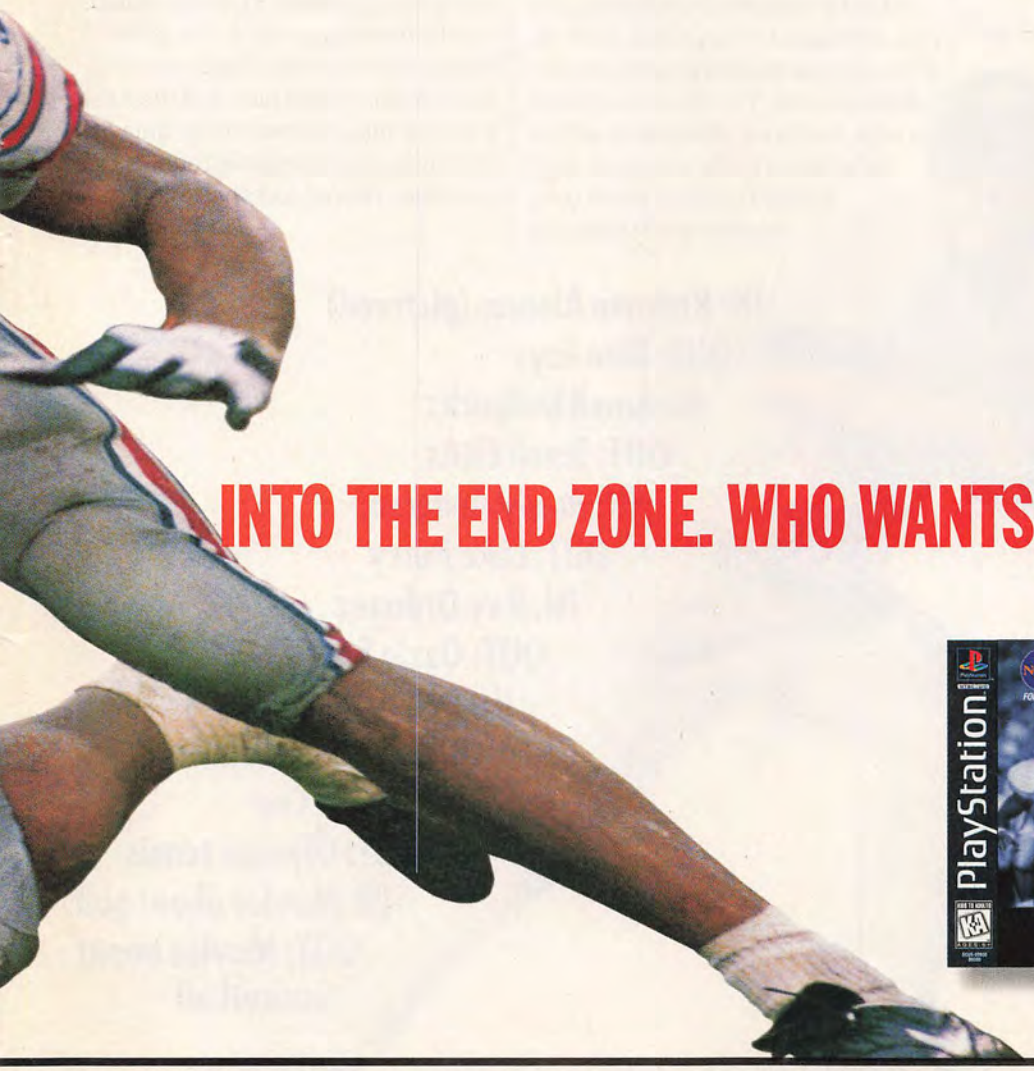

INTO THE END ZONE. WHO WANTS A RIDE?"

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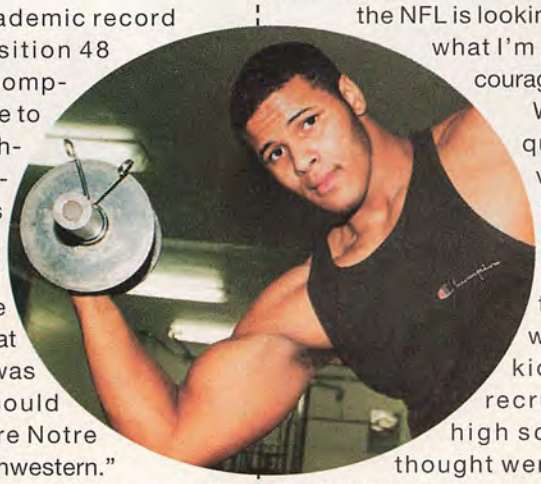
DOES THE NFL HAVE THE NEXT KEVIN GARNETT?

With Kevin Garnett's successful jump from high school to the NBA having inspired copycat tries by two other high school basketball players, Kobe Bryant and Jermaine O'Neal, one gets to wondering if there are any current prep football players capable of leapfrogging college into the NFL.

"There are not," says Bobby Burton, managing editor of the *National Recruiting Advisor*, a publication devoted to scouting high school football players. "Football is much different than basketball....In football, it's hard for an 18-year-old to have the physical ability. In basketball, sure, you can reach 7-foot pretty quick, but it's hard to be able to bench press 400 pounds if you're a lineman."

However, one prep player is considering testing Burton's thinking, which is the conventional line. Hubert Thompson, a 6-5, 260-pound senior defensive tackle at Chicago-area Proviso West High and the No. 1-rated player in Illinois, is mulling bypassing college to enter the 1997 NFL draft. Even Burton grants that Thompson is a standout prospect: "The kid is an absolute monster...but the physical jump to the NFL is unbelievable."



COURTESY PROVISO WEST H.S.

With an academic record below Proposition 48 standards, Thompson would have to sit out his freshman year of college. Says his coach at Proviso West, John Wilson, "The only schools that told me there was no way they could admit him were Notre Dame and Northwestern."

If the NFL seems too daunting, the CFL and junior college are options. Wilson hopes his player takes the traditional route. "I'd rather have him in a nice four-year institution where he's going to be coached, he's going to mature not only physically but certainly mentally. When he's done three or four years down the road, he's really what the NFL is looking for. That's what I'm going to encourage him to do."

Wilson quotes a University of Illinois recruiter as telling him that "there were only two kids I've ever recruited out of high school who I thought were definitely can't-miss players. One was Bruce Smith, and your kid's the other." Rather than Garnett, Smith, who became a No. 1 draft pick and the best pass-rushing lineman of his time after four years at Virginia Tech, is the example Thompson should follow.

—Jeff Weinstock

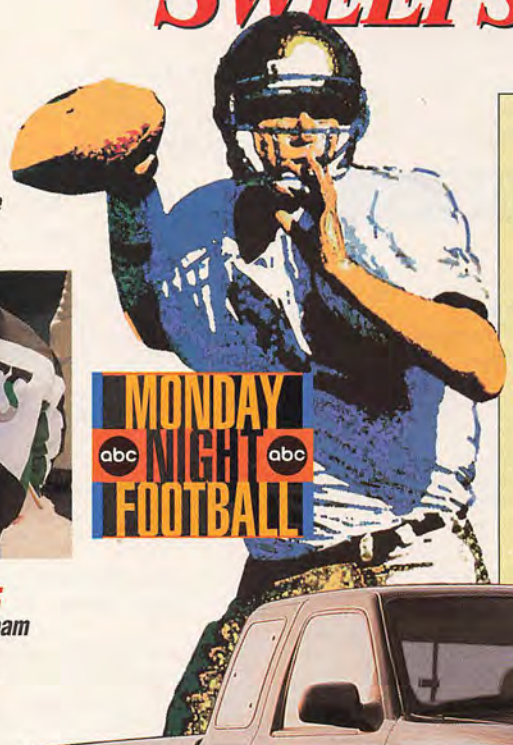
IN & OUT

SCOTT JORDAN LEVY

IN: Roberto Alomar (pictured)
OUT: Blue Jays
IN: Small ballparks
OUT: Small ERAs
IN: Brady Anderson
OUT: Luke Perry
IN: Rey Ordonez
OUT: Ozzie Smith
IN: Deion Sanders
OUT: Michael Irvin
IN: Davis Cup
OUT: Olympic tennis
IN: Movies about golf
OUT: Movies about basketball

Ford Presents

"Get Into The Game II" Sweepstakes



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SPORT

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September	2nd
Dallas at Chicago	
Second Week	
September	9th
Philadelphia at Green Bay	
Third Week	
September	16th
Buffalo at Pittsburgh	
Fourth Week	
September	23rd
Miami at Indy	
Fifth Week	
September	30th
Dallas at Philadelphia	

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Not responsible for lost, misdirected, damaged, postage-due, illegible, late mail, printing or other errors. **3)** Selected entrants will be selected in a random drawing conducted on or about January 3, 1997, from among all eligible entries received, under the supervision of an independent certified public accountant, whose decisions shall be final on all matters concerning the sweepstakes drawing. Odds of winning are determined by the total number of eligible entries received. Limit one prize per family or household. All prizes will be awarded. Entries become the property of Petersen Publishing Company and will not be returned. Each entrant consents to the transfer of all information contained on his/her entry form(s) to other companies. Entry constitutes permission to use winner's name and likeness for promotional purposes without added compensation except where prohibited. **4)** Selected entrants will be notified by mail. Selected entrants must follow the directions contained in any required Affidavit of Eligibility/ Release of Liability/ Prize Acceptance Form or any correspondence attached therewith and return all forms, correctly filled out within fourteen (14) days of the date on the correspondence. Non compliance within this time period will result in disqualification and an alternate will be selected. Canadian residents will be required to correctly answer a skilled testing question, before a prize can be awarded. In the event the skill testing question is incorrectly answered, the prize will not be awarded. **5)** The prizes are as follows: Grand Prize (there is one grand prize)–A 1997 Ford Ranger SuperCab XLT 4x4 with PEP 853A. Approximate MSRP of Grand Prize is $20,010.00. First Prize (there is one first prize) Trip for two to the 31st annual NFL Championship Game in New Orleans, LA January 26, 1997, includes round trip airfare (coach) for two from the airport closest to the winner's residence to New Orleans, LA. three nights deluxe hotel accommodations (double occupancy), meals, pre-game party, reserved seats at the championship game and ground transportation to and from the game. Maximum retail value is $5,000.00. Second Prize (there are twenty second prizes) Pro-Player NFL team jackets. Approximate retail value is $110.00. Third Prize (there are twenty third prizes) 12 month subscription to SPORT Magazine. Approximate retail value is $19.95. No transfer of the prizes is allowed. No substitution of any of the prizes except by sweepstakes sponsor (due to prize availability), in which case a prize or prizes of equal or greater value will be awarded. Value of prizes stated in U.S. currency. 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HOW TO ENTER: 1) Answer each of the three questions above by writing in the your answer on the appropriate game date. Only one answer per question. **2)** Fill out this official entry form with your complete name and address (no P.O. boxes). **3) Cut out the entry form and send it in or mail to: "Get Into The Game II Sweepstakes", P.O. Box 3303 , St. Cloud, MN 56397-3303.**

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Entry Form Instructions: No purchase necessary. See official contest rules for complete details. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. Contest ends January 3, 1997.

BUILT FUN TOUGH Ford

sport talk

VICTOR AWARDS

The 30th anniversary of the Victor Awards, America's longest-running nationally televised sports awards show, is history, but the excitement still resonates.

Victors were presented at the Las Vegas Hilton to the world's greatest present-day athletes. And in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the show, special awards were presented in 15 categories of sport honoring top athletes of the past three decades.

THE WINNERS:

Baseball
Player—Greg Maddux
Manager—Lou Piniella
Comeback—Orel Hershiser
Rookie—Hideo Nomo

Pro Football
Player—Emmitt Smith
Coach—Barry Switzer
Comeback—Michael Jordan
Rookie—Damon Stoudamire

College Football
Player—Darnell Autry
Coach—Gary Barnett

College Basketball
Men's Player—Ray Allen
Women's Player—Kara Wolters
Men's Coach—Rick Pitino
Women's Coach—Geno Auriemma

Hockey
Player—Mario Lemieux
Coach—Scotty Bowman
Comeback—Mario Lemieux
Rookie—Ed Jovanovski

Tennis
Men's Player—Pete Sampras
Women's Player—Steffi Graf
Comeback—Monica Seles

Golf
Men's Player—Greg Norman
Women's Player—Annika Sorenstam

Track & Field
Male—Michael Johnson
Female—Jackie Joyner-Kersee

Boxing
Boxer—Oscar De La Hoya
Comeback—Mike Tyson

Bowling
Mike Aulby

Horse Racing
Jockey—Pat Day

Auto Racing
Driver—Dale Earnhardt

Soccer
Alexi Lalas

Sportswriter
Peter Vecsey

Broadcasting
Sportscaster—Bob Costas

Hall Of Fame Inductee
Barron Hilton

Special Achievement (Aviation)
Dick Rutan
Jeana Yeager

30TH ANNIVERSARY VICTOR AWARDS THE BEST OF THE PAST 30 YEARS:

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Baseball—**Pete Rose**
Hockey—**Wayne Gretzky**
Men's Golf—**Jack Nicklaus**
Women's Golf—**Kathy Whitworth**
Men's Tennis—**Jimmy Connors**
Women's Tennis—**Martina Navratilova**
Men's Track & Field—**Carl Lewis**
Women's Track & Field—**Evelyn Ashford**
Boxing—**Muhammad Ali**
Auto Racing—**Mario Andretti**
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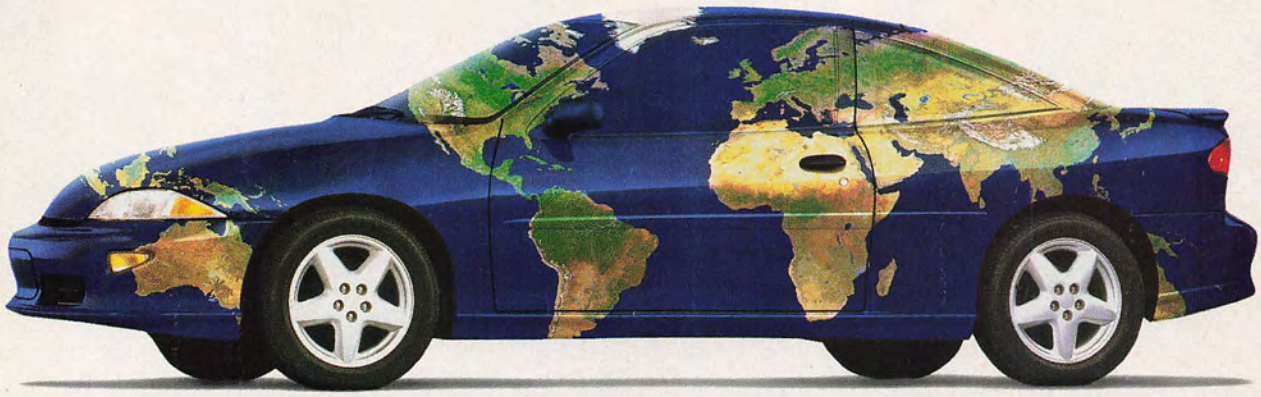

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NOTHING BUT NET

Two guys talking sports

Is Albert Belle bad for baseball? Larry the Big Man and Dr. Frapperton debate the matter.

Big Man: Albert Belle is a brute and a pox on baseball.

Frapperton: Don't listen to these garter-wearing media pansies dumping on Belle for playing hard.

Big Man: Playing hard? You call trying to decapitate Fernando Vina playing hard?

Frapperton: God, that's good baseball. Belle's the friggin' man!

Big Man: Listen, Myron, I won't suffer your defense of blatant thuggery.

Frapperton: Whoa, sweet phrasing. You still going to the Learning Tree?

Big Man: Yes, I'm taking Introduction to Grammar, Quilt Making, and How to Earn Millions Doing Voice-Overs in Hollywood.

Frapperton: Adult education is a wonderful thing, as is my man Albert Belle.

Big Man: Stop defending this guy. Chasing down trick-or-treaters, throwing baseballs at fans and photographers. If he couldn't hit a baseball, he'd be locked up.

Frapperton: So he cursed Hannah Stormy, so what?

Big Man: Hannah Storm.

Frapperton: He cursed Hannah Storm? Now, that's reprehensible. The other stuff was minor transsgresionns.

Big Man: You mean transgressions.

Frapperton: @*%&# you, you show-off! So Belle has a bad temper. Dennis Rodman is a complete menace and he gets made into an icon.

Big Man: Jo-o-o-ey! Jo-o-o-ey! Jo-o-o-ey!

Frapperton: Stop that! Stop that right now, Big Man! I'm warning you.

Big Man: Jo-o-o-ey!

Frapperton: The guy is the best thing to happen to baseball in a long time. He's got the big bat, the big body.

Big Man: I'll tell you who's got the body, Cleveland Cavaliers forward-center Michael Cage. Those shoulders.

Frapperton: Yes, shoulders.

Big Man: As we near the passage of the millennium, it's time we in this nation begin to hold each other accountable for our actions and not claim victimization by the media. Albert Belle is not being persecuted, but rather being held to a standard of decent behavior required of all Americans.

Frapperton: Preach it, Big Man! Preach it! Sell it! Put it in an envelope, put a stamp on it and mail it! Put it in a big ol' box, put like a bow on it—

Big Man: Easy, Doc, easy now. Take a shot of your inhaler.

Frapperton: Belle's going to break Roger Maris' home run mark, if not this year, then next.

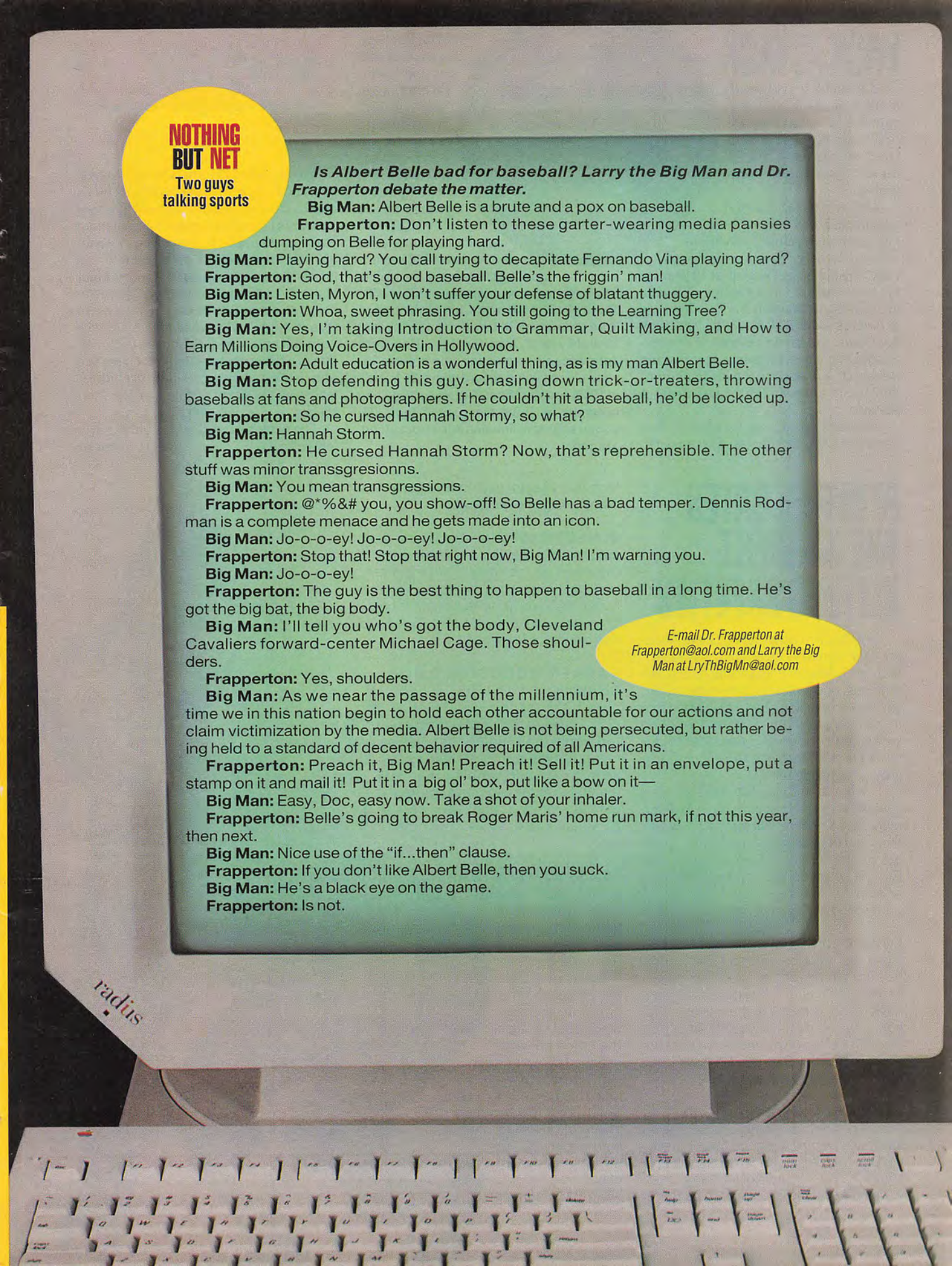
Big Man: Nice use of the "if...then" clause.

Frapperton: If you don't like Albert Belle, then you suck.

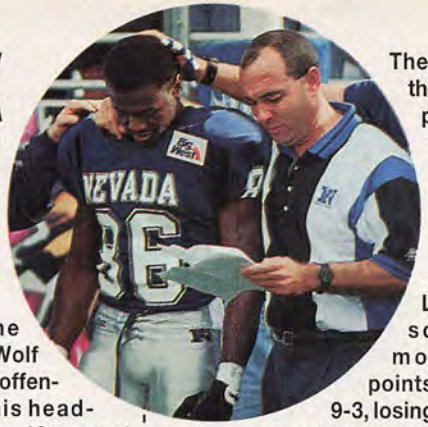
Big Man: He's a black eye on the game.

Frapperton: Is not.

E-mail Dr. Frapperton at Frapperton@aol.com and Larry the Big Man at LryThBigMn@aol.com



PACK ATTACK



University of Nevada athletic director Chris Ault calls his football program the "best-kept secret in the western United States." Despite his efforts, that is.

Ault, who designed the scheme that has made the Wolf Pack something close to an offensive absurdity, gave up his head-coaching duties last year after 19 years at the helm, but not before bringing Nevada up from NCAA Division II to the elite level of college football (I-A). Ault's 1992 Wolf Pack team produced a Big West championship and a bowl appearance, making Nevada the first school ever to accomplish each of those feats in its first I-A season.

Wherein lies such quick success? This part isn't a secret: offense, and lots of it. The Wolf Pack led the nation in both passing and total offense in 1993 and 1995 and finished second in both categories in '94. Last year's squad scored more than 43 points a game, went 9-3, losing 40-37 in overtime to Toledo in the Las Vegas Bowl, and featured offensive warriors Mike Maxwell (first QB since Jim McMahon to lead the nation in total offense for two straight years), Alex Van Dyke (New York Jets' second-round pick who broke a 30-year-old receiving record with 1,854 yards in 1995) and Kin Minor (116.9 yards rushing per game). All three, along with 7-foot, 320-pound offensive lineman Mike Rockwood, are gone.

sport talk

Re-stocking the shelves will be new head coach Jeff Tisdel, who served as quarterbacks coach for the past two seasons. His signal-caller will be either last year's backup, Eric Bennett, who threw for 807 yards in two starts while Maxwell was injured, or transfer John Dutton, a former high school All-American who, after beginning his career at Texas, is longing to throw. Tisdel, who was hand-picked by Ault, will aptly direct the multiple-option offense, which features four receivers and one running back and relies on quick releases off the line of scrimmage and short routes.

The names have changed but the system will not. *—Paul M. Johnson*

ATWATER RATES THE HARDEST-HITTING SAFETIES

Six-time Pro Bowl safety Steve Atwater, nicknamed "The Smiling Assassin," knows a little something about hitting. His ominous, body-blasting presence in Denver's defensive backfield has instilled fear in blockers and ball carriers for seven years now; opponents consider themselves lucky if they escape injury after a collision with number 27.

Here are the five hardest-hitting safeties in the NFL, according to Atwater, who chose not to rank himself. "I don't think any of these guys, including myself, are on the level that Dennis Smith and Ronnie Lott were on as far as knocking people out," he says. "But I think we do pretty good as far as hitting is concerned."

LOUIS OLIVER, Miami Dolphins "He didn't play much last year, but still I feel like he's up there. He comes up and brings it—I know that for a fact. I've never seen him back down from any of the big guys that he's gone up against. A lot of times you face big backs, guys who come up there and want to stick their head in there, and I haven't seen him back down yet."

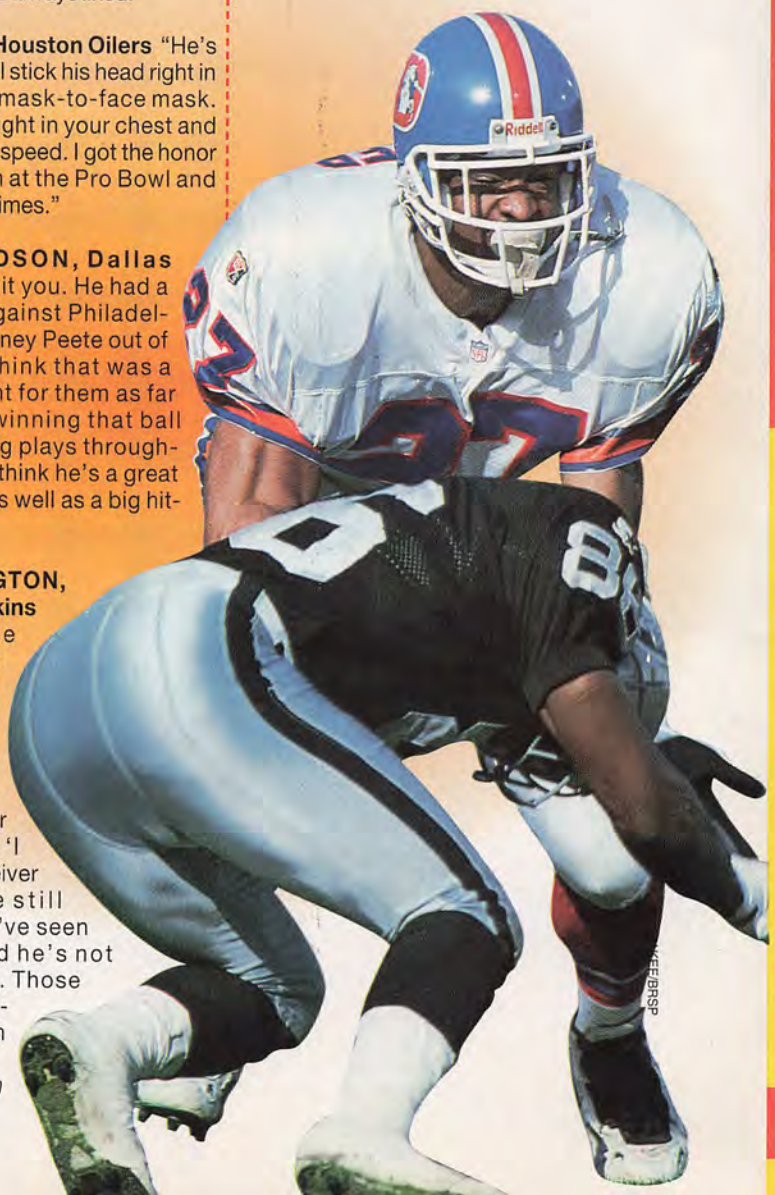
BENNIE BLADES, Detroit Lions "The Detroit games that I've seen, he's come up and made some really good hits. I remember Bennie from college when he played at Miami. He wasn't afraid of anything. I tried to do some things like him, as a matter of fact, in my senior year in college. He's a guy whose game I've always liked."

BLAINE BISHOP, Houston Oilers "He's not very tall and he'll stick his head right in there and go face mask-to-face mask. He'll put his head right in your chest and run through you full speed. I got the honor of playing with him at the Pro Bowl and saw him do it a few times."

DARREN WOODSON, Dallas Cowboys "He'll hit you. He had a big hit last year against Philadelphia, knocked Rodney Peete out of the game, and I think that was a major turning point for them as far as going on and winning that ball game. He made big plays throughout the year, and I think he's a great all-around player as well as a big hitter."

JAMES WASHINGTON, Washington Redskins "We played those guys last year and he knocked out two or three of our receivers and we still ended up winning the game on the last play. After the game he said: 'I knocked every receiver out. How did we still lose this game?' I've seen him play a lot and he's not afraid of anything. Those kind of players I really like to watch play."

—Paul M. Johnson



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VIDEO GAME REVIEW

VR SOCCER '96 (*VR Sports: For Sony PlayStation and PC, soon for Sega Saturn*).

The first of VR Sports' three game titles (followed by VR Golf and VR Baseball), VR Soccer '96 enters the crowded soccer pitch with added realism and creative graphics. VR claims that "the difference is real," and we'll agree. This next-generation sports title pays special attention to both the intricacies of soccer and the hungry gamer.

The graphics are the first thing to grab you. 3-D polygon figures grace a 3-D stadium, complete with Jumbotron, which plays live footage of the action. The player movements are unbelievably smooth and fluid thanks to Interactive Motion Capture, a nice bit of technology that digitally captures moves from professional players. The viewing perspective is unlimited, as 3-D Virtual FieldVision (as VR calls it) allows for a 360-degree outlook.

The actual game play? Solid. Player response is good and the action is fast-paced though easy to keep up with. Diving goalie saves, deft dribbling, slide tackles, windmill kicks, headers—they're all here. Eight different skill factors cater to all levels of player, and it's your decision as to which position on the field will be yours. Forty-four international teams are featured with the option of customized cups and tournaments as well as standard league play. Realistic chanting crowds spice up the audio, and popular BB announcer Bruce Davies supplies a great play-by-play.

—Paul M. Johnson

CHEAP HOME RUN TRICKS

By the end of this month, Albert Belle probably will have hit his 62nd homer—and become a footnote to Mark McGwire's 65. By midsummer, a campaign of assault (on records) and battery (of pitchers) seemed certain to yield other big feats—Frank Thomas zeroed in on 170 RBI, Edgar Martinez gunned for a record doubles haul, while a half-dozen or so players saw their average hover around .350.

Boy, great stuff, huh? What a game! Sorry, we're not impressed—no more than we would be to see salmon swimming upstream. In the Year of the Lame (on the mound, not on the Chinese calendar), the extraordinary became *booooring!* In fact, instead of being celebrated for setting records, hitters should face punishment if they don't—like, 100 hours of community service.

If judged by the environment in which they are set, all of the anticipated 1996 records should be discredited. At the All-Star break, 45 major-leaguers, including 28 in the American League alone, were on pace to exceed 30 homers. The AL's composite ERA was 5.10.

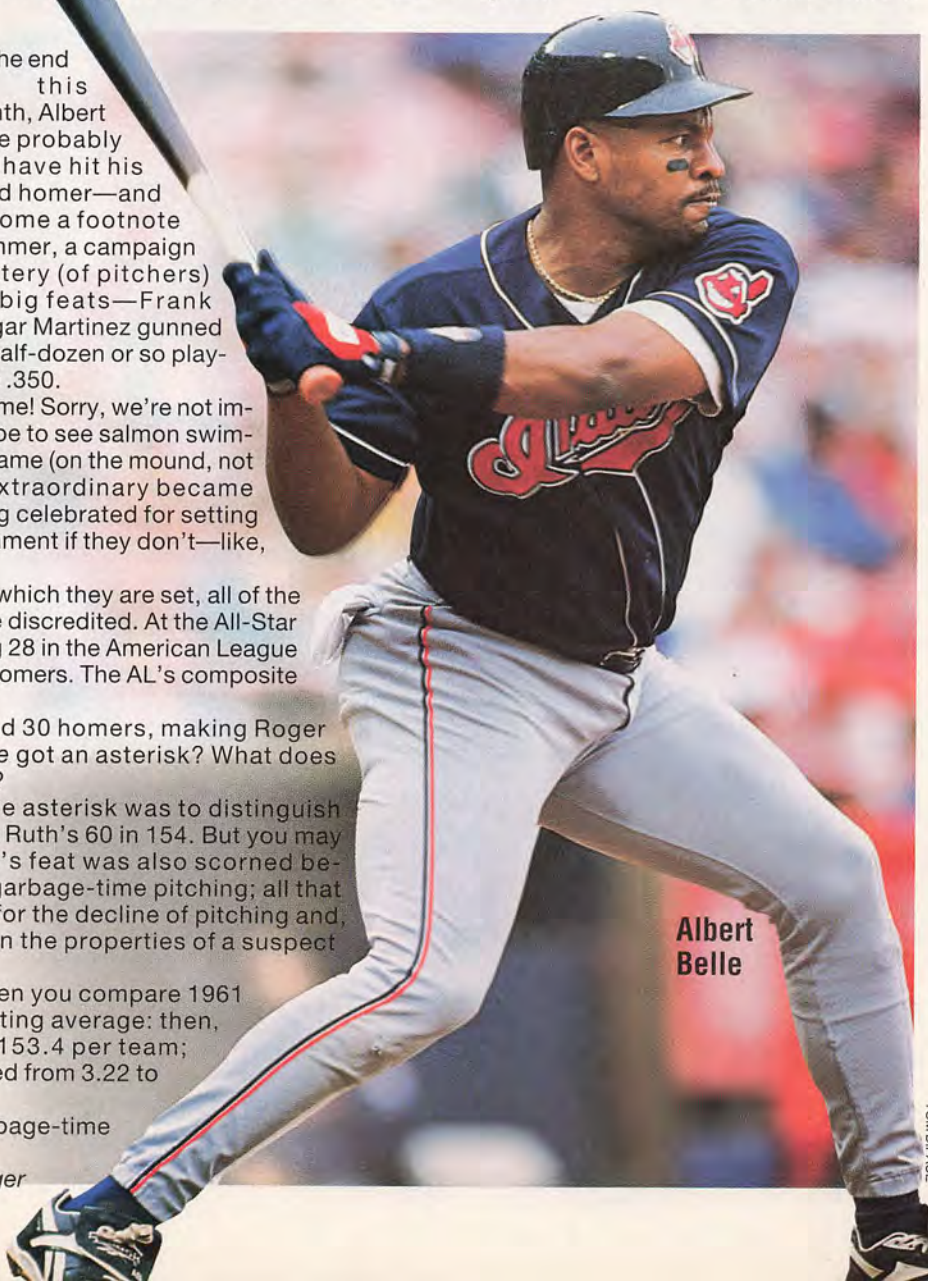
In 1961, only six ALers reached 30 homers, making Roger Maris' 61 truly significant. And *he* got an asterisk? What does McGwire get, his own solar system?

Most people are aware that the asterisk was to distinguish Maris' 61 in 162 games from Babe Ruth's 60 in 154. But you may be surprised to learn that Roger's feat was also scorned because, critics said, he exploited garbage-time pitching; all that season, theories were advanced for the decline of pitching and, yes, tests were also conducted on the properties of a suspect ball.

How interesting, especially when you compare 1961 AL figures to '96 projections. Batting average: then, .256; now, .279. Homers: then, 153.4 per team; now, 191.9. Team ERA: then, ranged from 3.22 to 4.74; now, from 4.32 to 6.71.

And they said '61 exploited garbage-time pitching? Looks like art from here.

—Tom Singer



Albert Belle

TOM DIPACE

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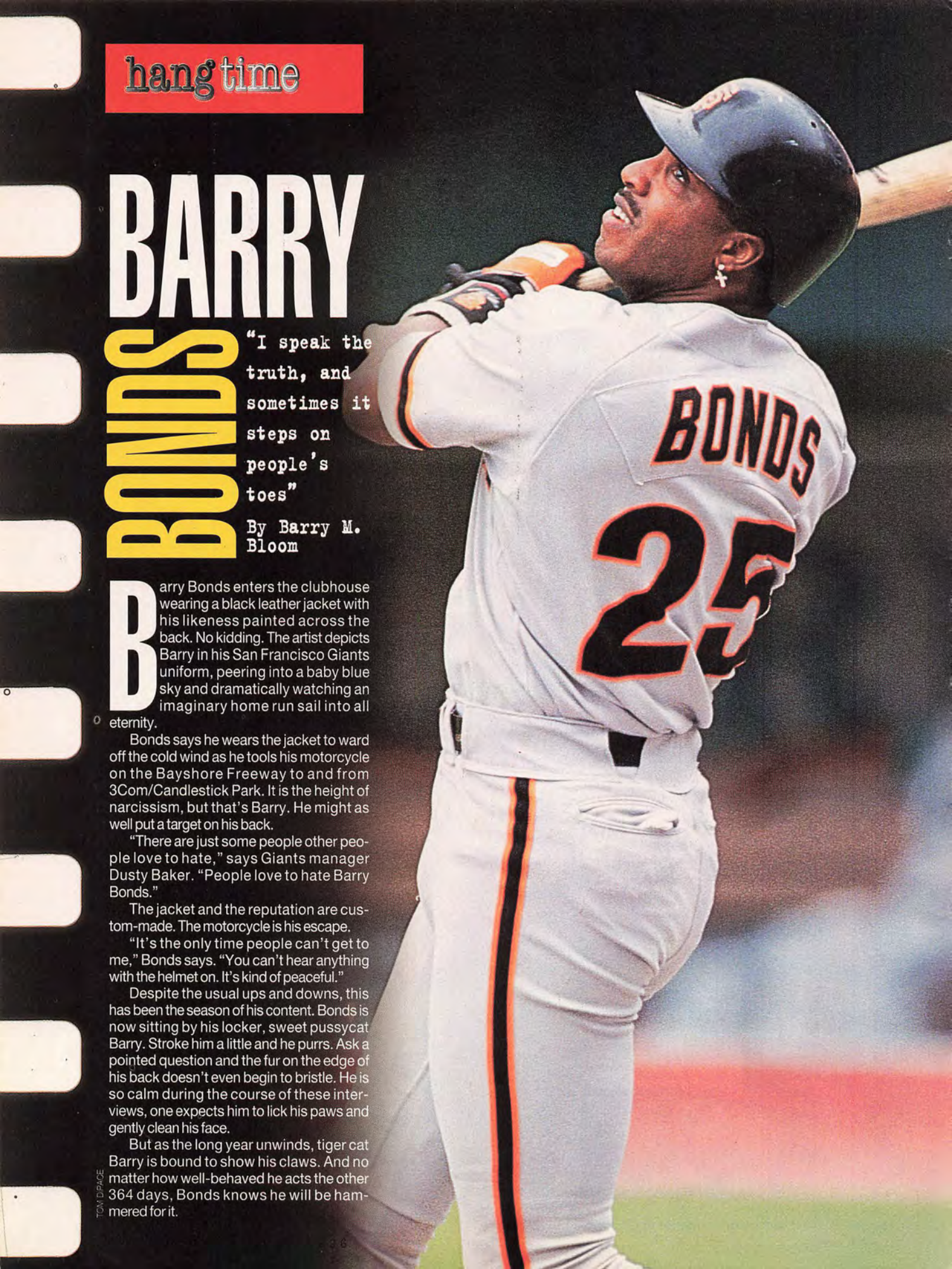
BARRY BONDS

"I speak the truth, and sometimes it steps on people's toes"

By Barry M. Bloom



TOM DIPACE

Barry Bonds enters the clubhouse wearing a black leather jacket with his likeness painted across the back. No kidding. The artist depicts Barry in his San Francisco Giants uniform, peering into a baby blue sky and dramatically watching an imaginary home run sail into all eternity.

Bonds says he wears the jacket to ward off the cold wind as he tools his motorcycle on the Bayshore Freeway to and from 3Com/Candlestick Park. It is the height of narcissism, but that's Barry. He might as well put a target on his back.

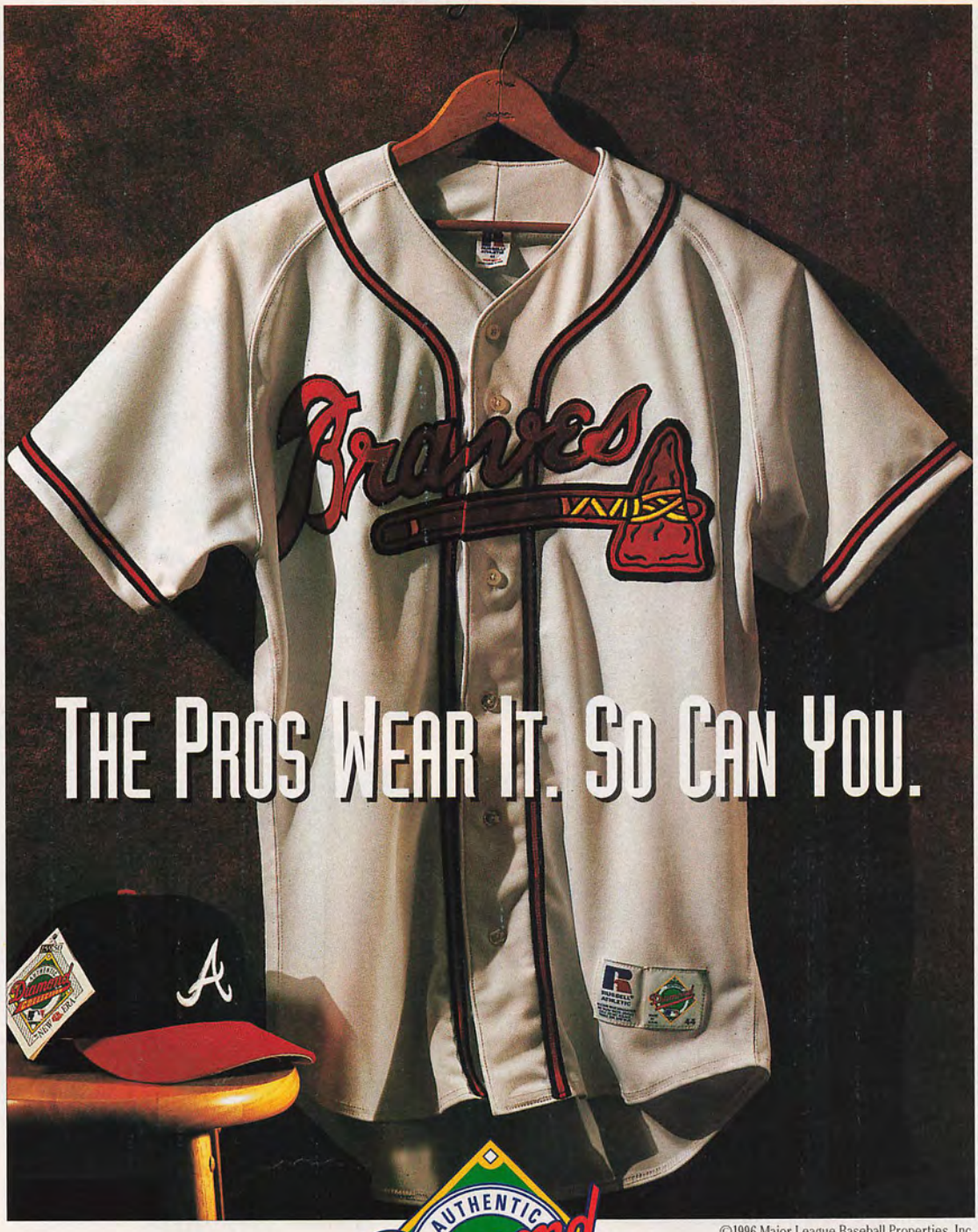
"There are just some people other people love to hate," says Giants manager Dusty Baker. "People love to hate Barry Bonds."

The jacket and the reputation are custom-made. The motorcycle is his escape.

"It's the only time people can't get to me," Bonds says. "You can't hear anything with the helmet on. It's kind of peaceful."

Despite the usual ups and downs, this has been the season of his content. Bonds is now sitting by his locker, sweet pussycat Barry. Stroke him a little and he purrs. Ask a pointed question and the fur on the edge of his back doesn't even begin to bristle. He is so calm during the course of these interviews, one expects him to lick his paws and gently clean his face.

But as the long year unwinds, tiger cat Barry is bound to show his claws. And no matter how well-behaved he acts the other 364 days, Bonds knows he will be hammered for it.



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WHAT A GAME

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hang time

"I'm stamped, man," Bonds says. "I'm one of the stamped players. I just deal with the stamp. Hopefully, one day in my career I can get my number retired and go to the Hall of Fame. One day I'll be dead and then they'll say good things about me. That's just the way it goes. Some players have got to be gone in order to be liked by others. Then some players can be around and they love you. That's just the way life is."

Bonds seems to have found his place in the San Francisco Bay Area, where Dad Bobby Bonds blazed the trail, Godfather Willie Mays hit many of his 660 home runs, and cousin Reggie Jackson won three consecutive World Series titles with the Oakland A's. But around the rest of the National League, Bonds is one of the players fans and media love to hate.

Bonds is often roasted in Pittsburgh, where fans still take umbrage because he left for free agency in 1992.

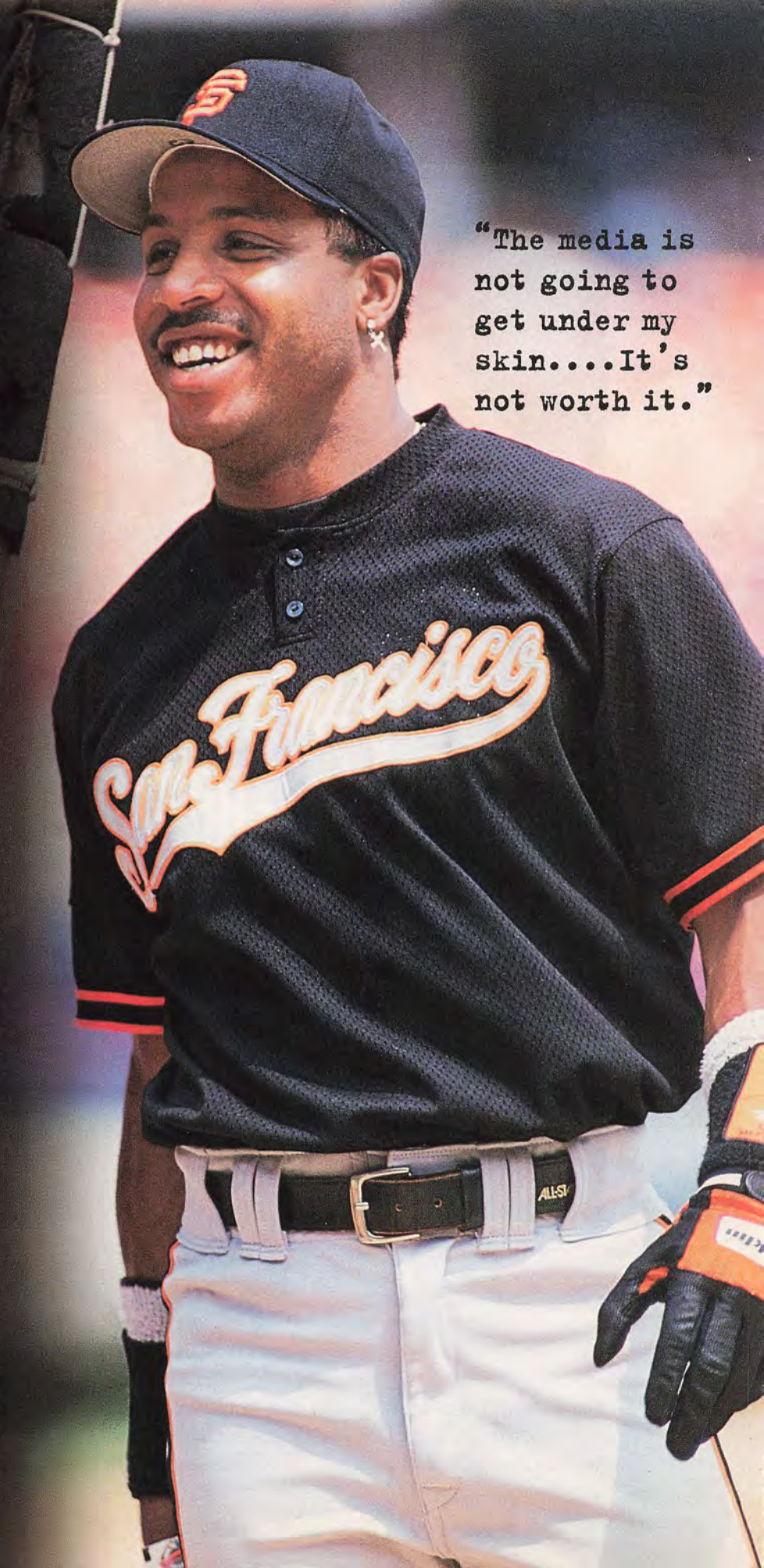
"Pittsburgh is such a negative town," Bonds says. "You get tired of it. Every day it always seemed like it was my fault. I'm one of 25 players. And that's more upsetting than anything else. It was like, why am I always getting it? The West Coast is calmer. They don't emphasize as much bad press. The East Coast frenzies on it.

"The best thing that happened to me was going home. The press and fans in my hometown are very good about me and what I do. They really like me. That's made a big difference. When they say there's no place like home, there's no place like home."

But even at home, Bonds has his detractors. His six-year, $43.5 million contract has taken care of that. The money has created untenable expectations. Thus, Bonds was criticized in the '95 strike-shortened season when he hit .294 with 30 doubles, 33 home runs, 104 RBI, 109 runs scored and 31 stolen bases. Barry's "off year" would have been a career season for many, but it came in the aftermath of the baseball strike.

Off the field, Bonds lived through the courtroom drama of an ugly divorce from his wife, Sun. The final separation was settled in March when a judge sided with Bonds. His spousal support was cut from $30,000 to $10,000 a month, and Bonds was given title to his Bay Area house. Allegations by his wife of physical abuse were deemed unfounded.

"I feel like this, man: What goes around comes around," Bonds says. "God's not going to let you take something that doesn't belong to you. I truly believe that, and that's exactly what happened. So I give the praises to the man upstairs and I'm very thankful. The facts and the truth spoke for itself. The truth isn't always nice. I speak the truth, and



MICHAEL PONZINI

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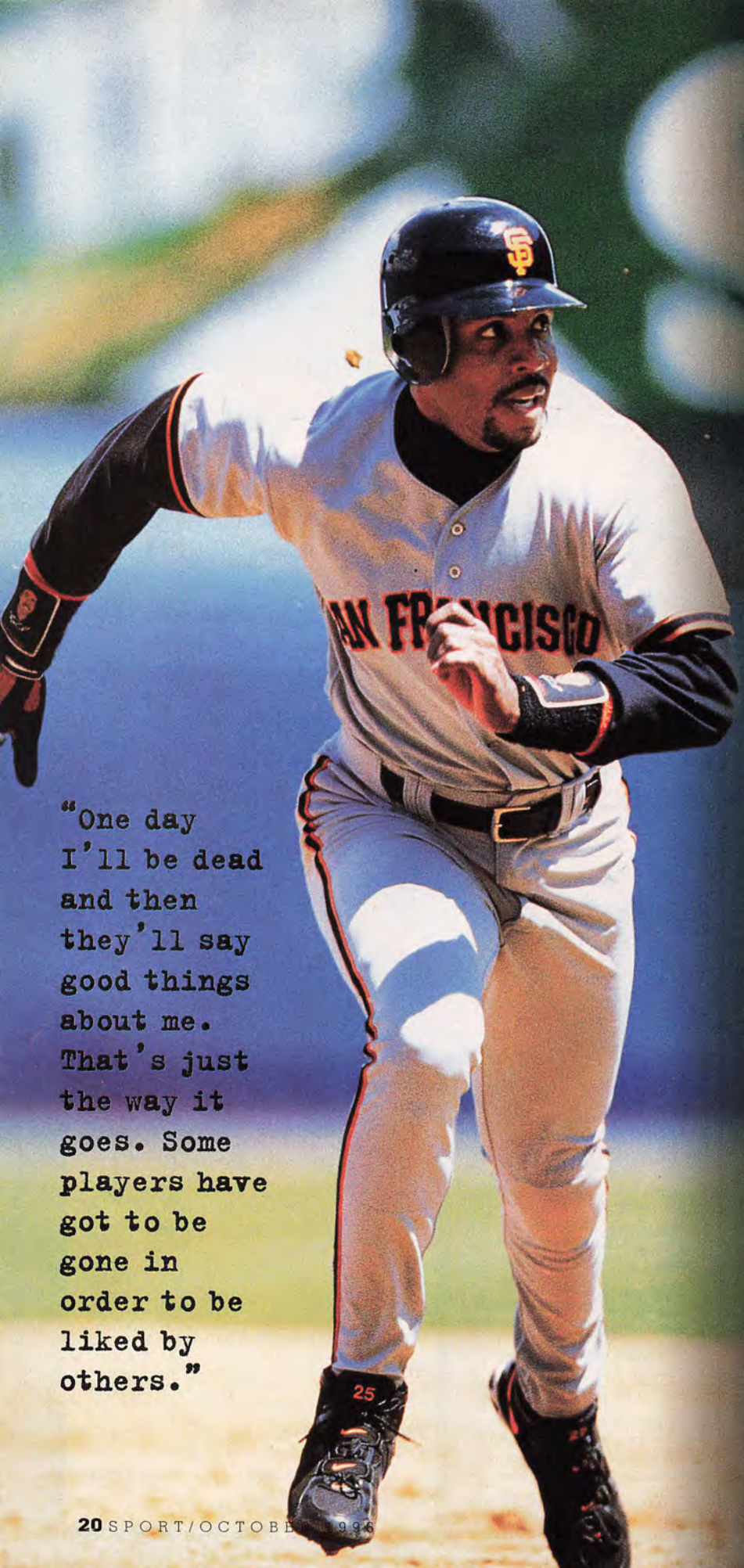
"One day I'll be dead and then they'll say good things about me. That's just the way it goes. Some players have got to be gone in order to be liked by others."

sometimes it steps on people's toes. But it is the truth."

Bonds opened the season a happier man and responded by tying a major-league record with 11 April home runs. He also began the season by taking this vow:

"The media is not going to get under my skin," he said. "I've been through a lot now. It's not worth it."

Yet the positive impact he had on the franchise in his first two San Francisco seasons seems to have diminished. Last summer, the frenzy reached its peak at home in June. Bonds thought a shot to deep left field by the New York Mets' Kelly Stinnett was going over the wall. After Bonds stood motionless, allowing the fly ball to land in play, one local columnist said he should be traded. Bonds suddenly became a poster boy for a generation of bratty ballplayers with swollen egos and bank accounts to match.

Unlike Cleveland's notorious Albert Belle, at least Bonds attempted an attitude adjustment this year. But character flaws still appeared. Baker had to act as mediator between Bonds and teammate Mark Carreon when the two engaged in a spring-training shouting match. Months later, another teammate, Shawon Dunston, took his rips. Comparing Bonds to Andre Dawson, Mark Grace and Matt Williams, Dunston said: "I wouldn't put Barry in their class. To me, those guys are better people than they are players. I wouldn't say that about Barry. There is more to being a baseball player than playing baseball. You have to be a gentleman too."

Bonds was hardly a gentleman when he tried to push longtime and well-respected *USA Today* baseball writer Rod Beaton out of the visitors' clubhouse in St. Louis. Beaton downplayed the incident, but Bonds apologized by purchasing $3,000 worth of game tickets for underprivileged children in the downtrodden neighborhood bordering the 36-year-old ballpark on Candlestick Point.

Though Bonds says he doesn't care what kind of impact he has on those around him, he isn't fooling anybody. He knows he has found a baseball home in San Francisco and he wants to be with the team when the $250 million downtown stadium opens in 2000. But he has only two years remaining on his contract.

"I just hope I'm doing the right things and doing enough for them to keep me home," Bonds says.

That, of course, is for Giants owner Peter Magowan to judge. The bull's-eye is already smack on Bonds' back. He need not give anyone a better shot. ★

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HOTSHOT

Henry Rodriguez

Oh Henry!

Henry Rodriguez cried last season the day he was traded by the Los Angeles Dodgers, with whom he had been since signing as a free agent at the tender age of 17.

"I grew up in the Los Angeles organization and I'll always love the Dodgers," says the 28-year-old outfielder, dealt to the Montreal Expos. "When I got traded, I couldn't believe it. I was so frustrated and so disappointed. I didn't want to leave L.A. because I had friends there. But now I'm in Montreal and I feel much better."

And why not? Liberated from the fickle affection shown him by the Dodgers, Rodriguez now has the major-league self-assuredness that comes with major-league job security, and the results have spoken. He jumped in front of the National League in both the home run and RBI races and had clubbed 25 round-trippers—the home jobs producing a showering of the field of Oh Henry! candy bars from his adoring fans—by the All-Star break.

Despite the impressive power numbers, Rodriguez maintains that his is a line-drive stroke, that he hasn't modified anything in his transformation into a constant home run threat.

"I hit 28 home runs in Double-A and never hit 20 after," says the personable Rodriguez. "I don't think about trying to go yard every time I'm at bat."

With the Dodgers, he felt that's what he'd have to do to retain a starting job. After the evacuation of Darryl Strawberry, Rodriguez figured right field was finally his, but the club moved him during spring training—emptying the spot for Raul Mondesi—to a platoon in left with Cory Snyder.

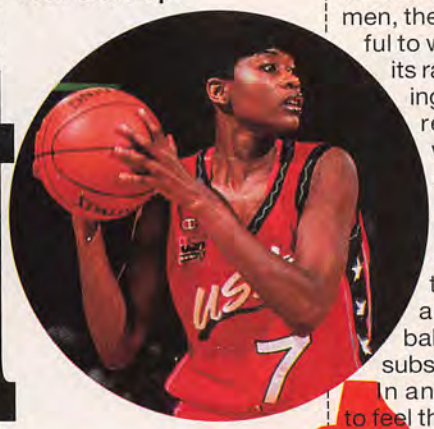
"I was a Dodger for three years, and I never really got the chance to play every day," says Rodriguez. "I think that was why I never put numbers up in the big leagues. The confidence has been great, and I think that's one of the keys to my success this year. What I always wanted was to play every day, and I'm getting that chance this year."

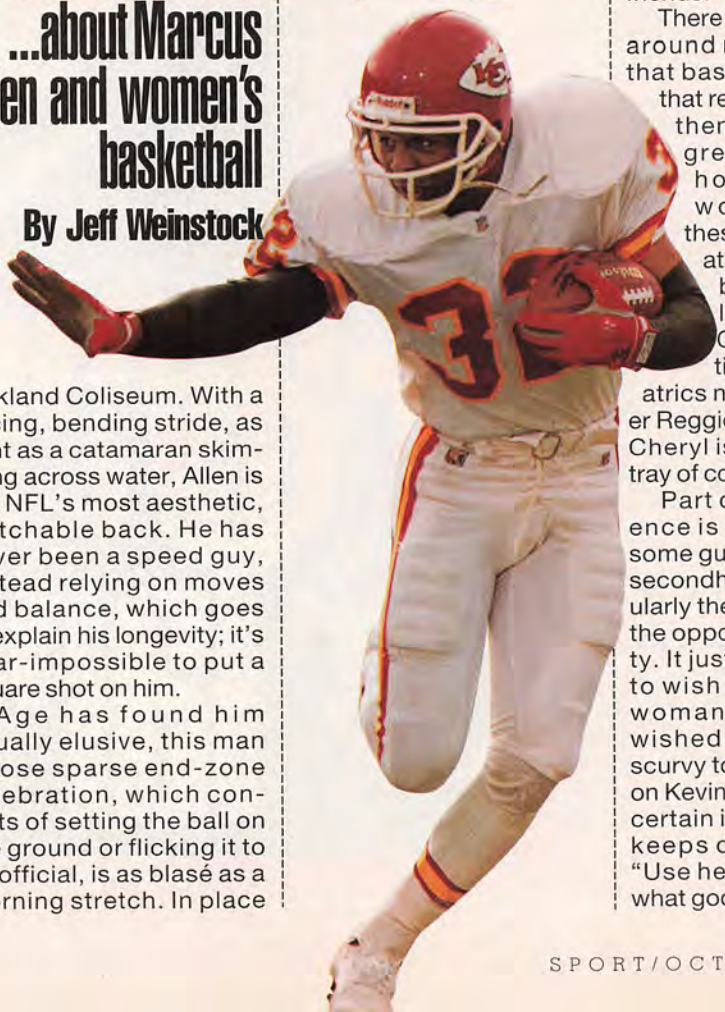
—Paul M. Johnson

TOM DIPACE

Get smart...about Marcus Allen and women's basketball

By Jeff Weinstock





What was pro football's most interesting off-season development?

Marcus Allen turned 36 years old in March. He should no longer be able to play halfback in the NFL, yet that's precisely what he'll be doing on the first Sunday of the season, and presumably most thereafter into winter.

This is not a tender item about a declining star getting by on veteran craft and guile. Sentiment is baseball's domain; there is no hiding age on a football field. Or if you do hide it, you stash it somewhere other than the backfield. Thirty-six, for God's sake. In running back years, 28 is old; 36 is Mesopotamian.

Having signed a new three-year deal with Kansas City, Allen is as relevant as ever. His 890 yards last season was eighth in the AFC. In his last game at age 35, he rushed for 94 yards in the Chiefs' playoff loss to Indianapolis. If in his 15th year he scores twice, Allen will become the all-time touchdown leader among running backs. And this, despite losing four peak years as a member of the L.A. Raiders, from age 28 to 31, and indeterminate yards and scores to Al Davis' self-spiting megalomania, relegated to a blocking back or third-down appearances.

Because so much of the notice he has received is for outlasting Davis, Allen has never been acknowledged for the runner he is. There was a time when he was called the game's best all-around back, vaguely damning praise suggesting he was good at all things though great at none. Recall what little joy Thurman Thomas took from the designation. Television analyst Will McDonough sneeringly called Allen "a glorified Joe Washington." One might counter, more accurately, that McDonough is a glorified Irv Cross.

OTTO GRELLE/ALLSPORT

Allen shouldn't need defending. He is already the only player to gain 10,000 yards on the ground and 5,000 on receptions, setting the mark last year in full view of Davis in his veranda at the Oakland Coliseum. With a slicing, bending stride, as light as a catamaran skimming across water, Allen is the NFL's most aesthetic, watchable back. He has never been a speed guy, instead relying on moves and balance, which goes to explain his longevity; it's near-impossible to put a square shot on him.

Age has found him equally elusive, this man whose sparse end-zone celebration, which consists of setting the ball on the ground or flicking it to an official, is as blasé as a morning stretch. In place of a football, Allen has spiked time itself.

Looking forward to the Women's National Basketball Association, slated for a summer 1997 start-up?

No, and here's the reason: Women are not terribly good at basketball. There, I said it.

DOUG PENSINGER/ALLSPORT

Were there only some variation in women's basketball not offered by the men, the way we are grateful to women's tennis for its rallies and shotmaking as opposed to the redundant service winners in the men's game. Unlike tennis, or volleyball, the only difference between women's and men's basketball is that women are substantially worse at it. In any sport, you have to feel the athletes are your surrogates; that would be you out there if only you were taller, stronger, leaner, faster and braver. As ballplayers, women aren't all that fast, don't jump so well, they're short, they push their shots. If I wanted to watch a group of slow, short push-shooters, I'd round up a group of my friends.

There may be no getting around making the case that basketball is a sport that requires, if not men, then maleness—aggression, bravado, hostility. When a woman evinces these characteristics, at least on a basketball court, it seems like a put-on. Cheryl Miller practiced the same theatrics noted of her brother Reggie. Reggie has flair; Cheryl is hammier than a tray of cordon bleu.

Part of the fan experience is being treated to some gut-level, antisocial, secondhand thrills, particularly the license to rave at the opponent with impunity. It just seems bad form to wish humiliation on a woman, the way I once wished everything from scurvy to canker sores upon Kevin McHale. I mean, a certain ingrained chivalry keeps one from yelling, "Use her!" doesn't it? So what good is it? ★

NFL PRO LINE AUTHENTIC

HOTSHOT

Mark Chmura

Mark Chmura went into his fourth Packers training camp last year with 16 career receptions, a label of being fragile, and with an uncertain future as a tight end simply warming the position for incoming holdout Keith Jackson. This season, he entered camp a Pro Bowl veteran and with the job security provided by a three-year contract.

"Things went good," Chmura, 27, understates. "I couldn't have written it any better."

The 6-5, 250-pound Chmura began authoring the script to his success story late in the '94 season, when his evolution into a more complete tight end resulted in six consecutive starting assignments, two of which came during Green Bay's playoff run. His development wasn't enough for Packers brass, evidently, who in March traded for perennial Pro Bowl tight end Jackson.

"They made that trade a ways back when they didn't know about my ability, so I understood it," says Chmura, which maintained throughout the holdout that Jackson's eventual presence would only make him better.

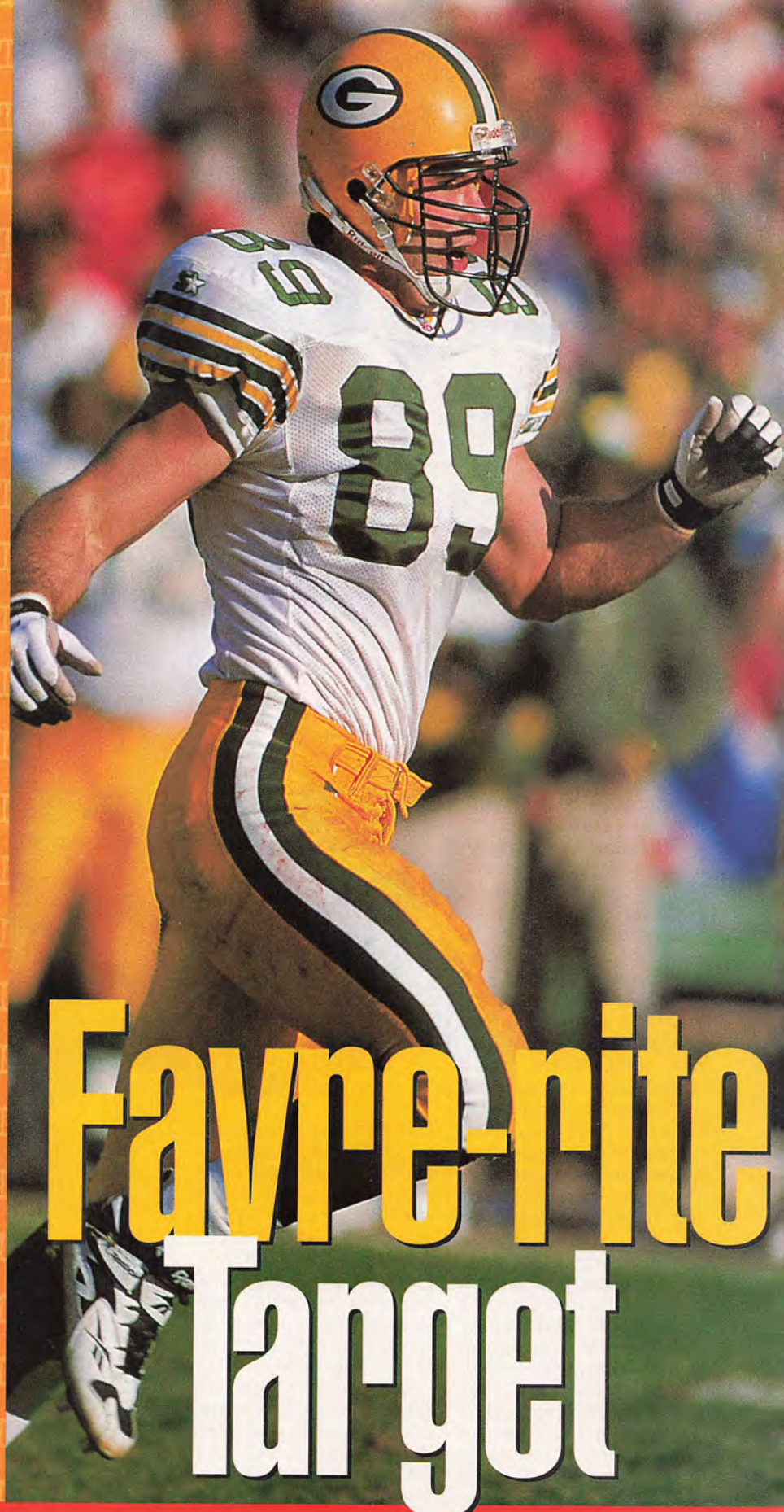
Quicker than expected, as it happened. As Jackson took in his first game as a Packer from the sidelines, Chmura hauled in five passes for 101 yards and a touchdown in a win over Minnesota. The game cemented Chmura's status as Green Bay's resident tight end, and Jackson, in an unfamiliar role, played the remainder of the year mainly as a backup.

"Originally, being a low draft pick, you just want to come in and compete," says Chmura, a sixth-round selection in the '92 draft who spent his entire rookie year on injured reserve with a lower back ailment painful enough to force him to consider quitting. But four years removed, the Deerfield, Mass., native does much more than simply compete: His breakthrough '95 season amounted to 54 catches for 679 yards and seven touchdowns.

"I knew he was going to be a great player," says league MVP and teammate Brett Favre, in discussing the player he considers his best friend. "It was just a matter of him getting the chance."

—Paul M. Johnson

PAUL JASIENSKI



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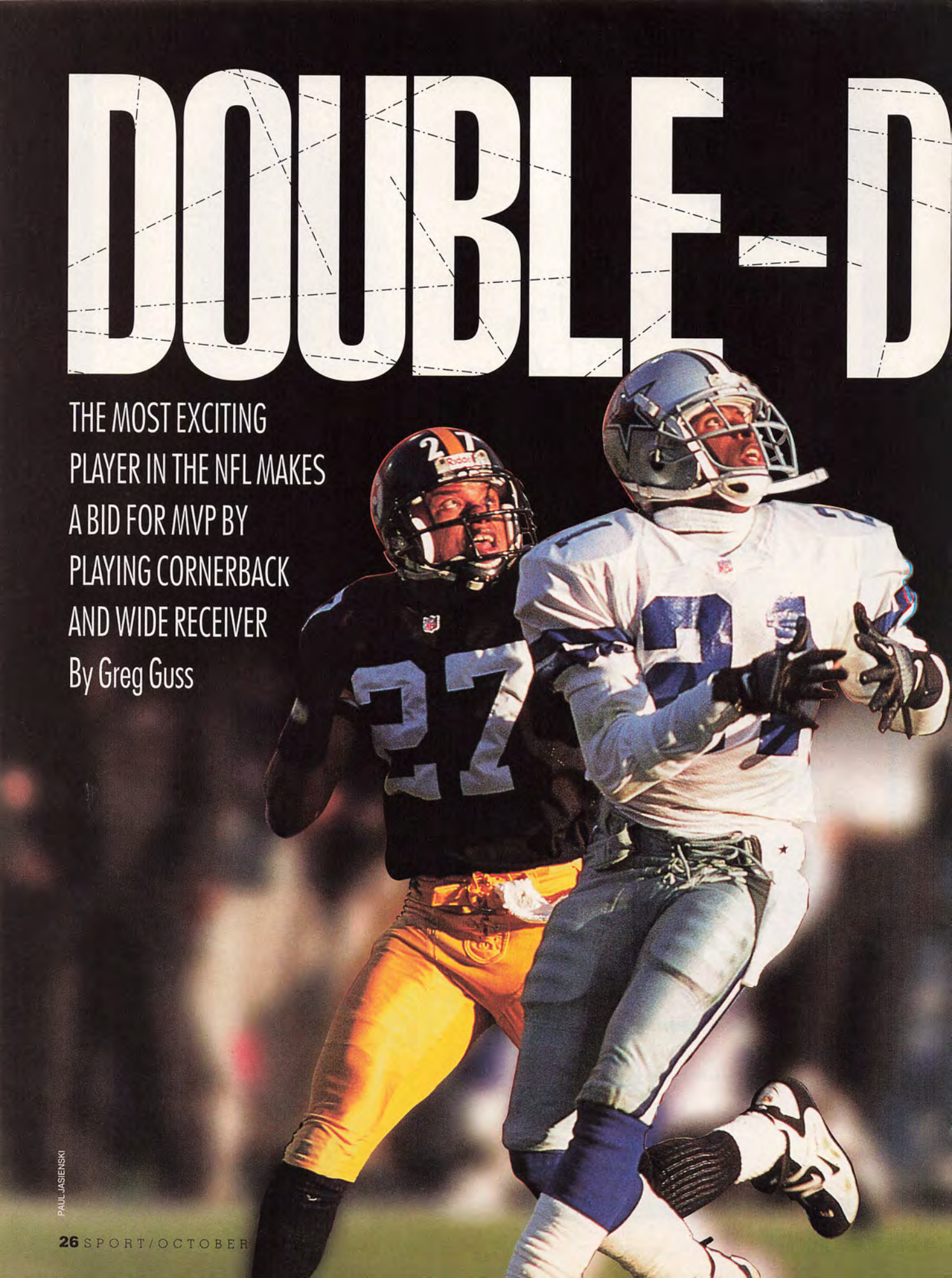
DOUBLE-D

THE MOST EXCITING PLAYER IN THE NFL MAKES A BID FOR MVP BY PLAYING CORNERBACK AND WIDE RECEIVER

By Greg Guss



PAUL JASIENSKI

UTY DEION

"I'm going to give the kids something to dream about," Deion Sanders proclaims in self-absorbed reverie, his eyes glazed and distant. As if the very breath escaping his mouth as he speaks is crystallizing before him in the form of touchdowns and Super Bowl rings, Sanders is mesmerized by this highlight reel inside his head.

Welcome to Prime Time's crib, a chimerical, pie-in-the-sky world in which a cornerback gets paid $13 million to sign on the dotted line and a retired baseball player has the opportunity to become the National Football League's Most Valuable Player. Rap albums, action films, TV commercials and magazine covers fill out the landscape of this fantasy-world-turned-reality.

Sanders is on the cusp of fulfilling his latest fancy, to become only the second two-way player in the NFL in the last 39 years. But these are not whimsical visions of sugarplums dancing in his head. He played professional baseball and football simultaneously, and now he will play both offense and defense for the Dallas Cowboys.

Almost invariably, what he sees is what he gets. While the average man may see a monochromatic world of obstacles and limitations, Sanders sees a neon-splashed mosaic of possibilities as colorful and limitless as the imagination. "I don't think of buying a home, I think of owning 50,000-square-foot mansions," Sanders says. So if Prime Time envisions himself strutting in the end zone in New Orleans in Super Bowl XXXI, the odds are that the rest of the world indeed will see number 21 doing an end-zone jig on Jan. 26, 1997.

But it is not until one sees him away from the glare of television cameras that one discovers that Sanders *works* to achieve his athletic success.

Naked in front of his locker at the Dallas Cowboys' practice facility in Valley Ranch, Texas, the singularity of his talent recedes. Away from the spotlight, Sanders is stripped of his "Prime Time" persona, distilled of all decorative precious metals, reduced to his essence, his primary attributes: his body and his mind. Here, mo-

mentarily, he is just plain Deion.

Beneath the shoulder pads, pimp hats and diamond-studded gold chains, Sanders is a man of modest build, a lean 185 pounds spread economically across a 6-foot frame. Unlike the statuesque physique of friend and teammate Michael Irvin, Sanders' comparably slight build belies the virtuoso within.

"I think because people associate me with this Hollywood-type image, they think I'm not working hard," says Sanders. "Because you make it look easy, people think, 'Hell, I could do that.' If it was so easy, how come more people aren't doing it?"

It, until this year, meant a year-round regimen of baseball and football. Through seven professional seasons as a major-league outfielder and NFL cornerback, Sanders parlayed his unique combination of athleticism and business savvy into numerous on-field accolades as well as a mind-boggling financial windfall.

At age 29, Sanders has become one of the most recognizable athletes in the country, launching himself into the stratosphere of sports' megastars with the likes of Michael Jordan, Dennis Rodman and Shaquille O'Neal. Sanders already has recorded a rap album, appropriately titled "Must Be the Money," and plans to make his debut on the silver screen in an action film after this season.

But as much as Sanders seems to crave the spotlight, he is actually most comfortable with his family or fishing with friends. Sanders' teammate, 360-pound offensive lineman Nate Newton, explains that Prime Time is just for show. "These are things y'all don't know about Deion because it doesn't get publicized," says Newton. "He don't drink. He don't do drugs. He don't cuss. He's a strong family man. He's only flashy when he's out in the public entertaining."

At an early age, Sanders recognized two things within: superior athletic skills and an intense desire to be rich. When he was 9, he says, pre-Neon Deion was outrunning and outplaying 15-year-olds. When he was 28, he became the only athlete in history to have played in both a World Series and Super Bowl.

Now he'd like to become the NFL's first two-way player since Roy Green played defensive back and wide receiver for the then-St. Louis Cardinals in 1981. Having lost the two-sport title with his retirement from baseball, Sanders has simply reinvented himself as the cornerback, wide receiver and punt returner for America's Team, the defending Super Bowl champion Cowboys.

"When I was a kid I played both ways," Sanders says as he eases into the gray leather recliner in the Cowboys' film room he bought for himself. "Luckily, now I'm with an owner and a coach who have the vision to utilize me fully. So we get a chance to make people see the game in a whole different light."

Sanders' two-way predecessor is the first to predict that Deion's double duty will be like no other. "There was a lot of local hype when I started playing both ways, but at that particular time, football players didn't have the same type of visibility they have today—especially cornerbacks," says Green, who went on to earn Pro Bowl honors as a full-time wide receiver. "They're a lot more marketable today. You see them with their helmets off now. Deion will be everywhere."

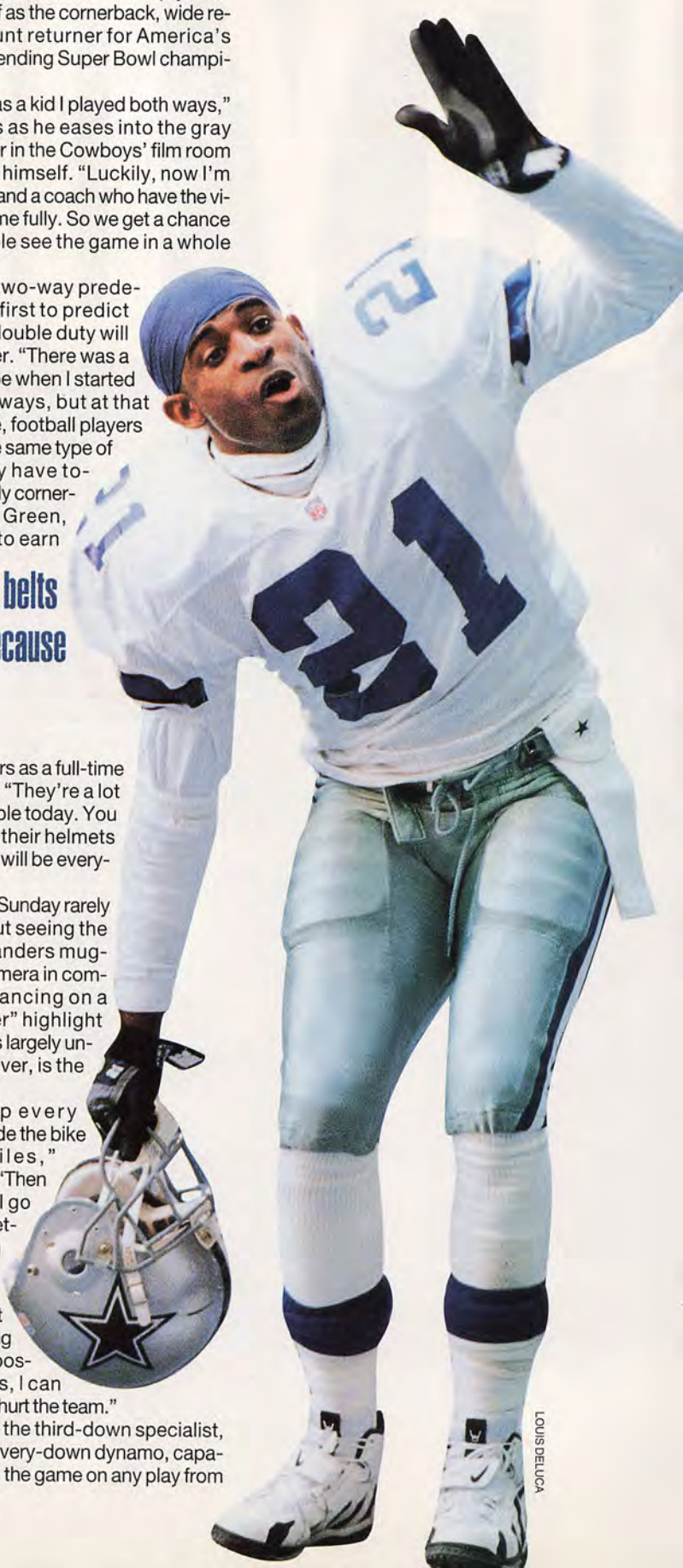
"They're going to have to strap on some seat belts in the stadium, maybe put in some air bags, because I'm going to get down."

An autumn Sunday rarely passes without seeing the ubiquitous Sanders mugging for the camera in commercials or dancing on a "SportsCenter" highlight clip. What goes largely unnoticed, however, is the hard work.

"I wake up every morning and ride the bike five to 12 miles," Sanders says. "Then after practice I go and play basketball all day. I'm getting my conditioning in so that when it comes to playing 90 or 100 of a possible 120 plays, I can do that and not hurt the team."

In the era of the third-down specialist, Sanders is an every-down dynamo, capable of changing the game on any play from

Prime Time waved goodbye to baseball to focus on helping out with the receiver chores in Big D.



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either side of the ball. "We're going to try to get the ball in Deion's hands as often as possible this year," says Cowboys head coach Barry Switzer. "He's one of those guys who can score a touchdown any time he touches the ball."

Over the course of his career, Sanders has scored touchdowns in every imaginable way: two punt returns, three kickoff returns, six interception returns, two fumble returns, two receptions and one rushing. Now, with the first full training camp of his career under his belt, Sanders wants to put it all together in what he hopes will be a breakthrough season.

"They're going to have to strap on some seat belts in the stadium, maybe put in some air bags, because I'm going to get down," Prime Time boasts. "I've got some big plans for this season. I want this to be the best season I've ever had."

Cowboys wide-receivers coach Hubbard Alexander sees Pro Bowl potential in his affluent apprentice. "Deion wants to be the best at everything he does, and he's worked very hard to become a good wide receiver," says Alexander. "Naturally, he's got the one thing that every receiver wants

"Deion is the first player to be able to dominate and dictate a game from the defensive-back position." *—John Madden, Fox NFL analyst*

and that's speed."

But according to Alexander, Sanders has more than just fast feet. "Carl Lewis can run, but I don't think he can do what Deion does. Deion has presence. It's an important intangible in this league."

Prime Time worked overtime this summer to become a bona fide receiver. "He's perfected some routes that I didn't think he'd be able to run," says Alexander. "If Deion catches 45 to 50 balls, that'd be great. We've got so many offensive weapons on this team, that's all we need from him."

The man who will be throwing the balls his way, Cowboys quarterback Troy Aikman, sees Sanders as a future great wideout. "Deion has the ability to be one of the great wide receivers. It's not like anybody here doesn't expect him to be a great player. But he still has a lot to learn."

As far as playing cornerback is con-

Deion may find it ain't easy being Green—Roy Green—the NFL's last two-way player back in 1981.

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Things have changed now. I own four homes in Southern California. The one I'm living in now in Bel Air is worth more than one million dollars. I own several cars, among them a Rolls Royce and a Mercedes Benz. Right now, I have a million dollar line of credit with the banks and have certificates of deposit at $100,000 each in my bank in Beverly Hills.

Best of all, I have time to have fun. To be me. To do what I want. I work about 4 hours a day, the rest of the day, I do things that please me. Some days I go swimming and sailing—shopping. Other days, I play racquetball or tennis. Sometimes, frankly, I just lie out under the sun with a good book. I love to take long vacations. I just got back from a two week vacation from—Maui, Hawaii.

I'm not really trying to impress you with my wealth. All I'm trying to do here is to prove to you that if it wasn't because of that money secret I was lucky enough to find that day, I still would have been poor or maybe even bankrupt. It was only through this amazing money secret that I could pull myself out of debt and become wealthy. Who knows what would have happened to my family and me.

Knowing about this secret changed my life completely. It brought me wealth, happiness, and most important of all—peace of mind. This secret will change your life, too! It will give you everything you need and will solve all your money problems. Of course you don't have to take my word for it. You can try it for yourself. To see that you try this secret, I'm willing to give you $20.00 in cash. (I'm giving my address at the bottom of this page.) I figure, if I spend $20.00, I get your attention. And you will prove it to yourself this amazing money secret will work for you, too!

Why, you may ask, am I willing to share this secret with you? To make money? Hardly. First, I already have all the money and possessions I'll ever need. Second, my secret does not involve any sort of competition whatsoever. Third, nothing is more satisfying to me than sharing my secret only with those who realize a golden opportunity and get on it quickly.

This secret is incredibly simple. Anyone can use it. You can get started with practically no money at all and the risk is almost zero. You don't need special training or even a high school education. It doesn't matter how young or old you are and it will work for you at home or even while you are on vacation.

Let me tell you more about this fascinating money making secret:

With this secret the money can roll in fast. In some cases you may be able to cash in literally overnight. If you can follow simple instructions you can get started in a single afternoon and it is possible to have spendable money in your hands the very next morning. In fact, this just might be the fastest *legal* way to make money that has ever been invented!

This is a very safe way to get extra cash. It is practically risk free. It is not a dangerous gamble. Everything you do has already been tested and you can get started for less money than most people spend for a night on the town.

One of the nicest things about this whole idea is that you can do it at home in your spare time. You don't need equipment or an office. It doesn't matter where you live either. You can use this secret to make money if you live in a big city or on a farm or anywhere in between. A husband and wife team from New York used my secret, worked at home in their spare time, and made $45,000 *in one year.*

This secret is simple. It would be hard to make a mistake if you tried. You don't need a college degree or even a high school education. All you need is a little common sense and the ability to follow simple, easy, step-by-step instructions. I personally know a man from New England who used this secret and made $2 million *in just 3 years.*

You can use this secret to make money no matter how old or how young you may be. There is no physical labor involved and everything is so easy it can be done whether you're a teenager or 90 years old. I know one woman who is over 65 and *is making all the money she needs* with this secret.

When you use this secret to make money you never have to try to convince anybody of anything. This has nothing to do with door-to-door selling, telephone solicitation, real estate or anything else that involves personal contact.

Everything about this idea is perfectly legal and honest. You will be proud of what you are doing and you will be providing a very valuable service.

It will only take you two hours to learn how to use this secret. After that everything is almost automatic. After you get started you can probably do everything that is necessary in three hours per week.

Here's what newspapers and magazines are saying about this incredible secret:

The Washington Times:
The Royal Road to Riches is paved with golden tips.

National Examiner:
John Wright has an excellent guide for achieving wealth in your spare time.

Income Opportunities:
The Royal Road to Riches is an invaluable guide for finding success in your own back yard.

News Tribune:
Wright's material is a MUST for anyone who contemplates making it as an independent entrepreneur.

Success:
John Wright believes in success, pure and simple.

Money Making Opportunities:
John Wright has a rare gift for helping people with no experience make lots of money. He's made many people wealthy.

California Political Week:
...The politics of high finance made easy.

The Tolucan:
You'll love...*The Royal Road to Riches.* It's filled with valuable information...only wish I'd known about it years ago!

Hollywood Citizen News:
He does more than give general ideas. He gives people a detailed A to Z plan to make big money.

The Desert Sun:
Wright's *Royal Road to Riches* lives up to its title in offering an uncomplicated path to financial success.

PROOF

I know you are skeptical. That simply shows your good business sense. Well, here is proof from people who have put this amazing secret into use and have gotten all the money they ever desired. Their initials have been used In order to protect their privacy, but I have full information and the actual proof of their success in my files.

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A. F., Providence. RI

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"I didn't believe it when you said the secret could produce money the *next morning.* Boy, was I wrong, and you were right! I purchased your *Royal Road to Riches.* On the basis of your advice, $9,800 poured in, in less than 24 hours! John, your secret is incredible!"
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C. M., Los Angeles, CA

'$500,000 In Six Months'
"I'm amazed at my success! By using your secret I made $500,000 in six months. That's more than twenty times what I've made in any single year before! I've never made so much money in such short time with minimum effort. My whole life I was waiting for this amazing miracle! Thank you, John Wright."
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Now at last, I've completely explained this remarkable secret in a special money making plan. I call it "The Royal Road to Riches". Some call it a miracle. You'll probably call it "The Secret of Riches". You will learn everything you need to know step-by-step. So you too can put this amazing money making secret to work for you and make all the money you need.

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"As Mr. John Wright's accountant, I certify that his assets exceed one million dollars." Mark Davis

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cerned, however, the only thing Deion has left to learn is how to defend against apathy. "It gets pretty boring sometimes," says Sanders. "I get really lackadaisical because I'm really not getting any action. Sometimes I'll come away from a game and people say, 'Well, he didn't do anything this game.' And I say, 'Well, the guy in front of me didn't do anything either,' but it doesn't seem like I did my job because I didn't make the big play. But it's because I don't get the opportunity."

Universally regarded as the best cover man in the game, Sanders has not allowed ambition to blur the main objective of his job in Dallas. "There's no question that my primary role on this team is still as a defensive back," Sanders says. "I'm a two-way player, but defensive back is feeding my family. Receiver's going to give 'em some snacks in there, you see what I'm sayin', but DB is where the meal's at."

The 1994 Defensive Player of the Year, Sanders is the active career leader in interception return yards and interceptions returned for touchdowns. But numbers alone do not explain Deion's dominance. In fact, Sanders begins to exert his influence as soon as an opponent begins to prepare for the Cowboys. "All week long, quarterbacks say in the paper: 'We're not going to stay away from him. We're going to go right at him.' But come game time, they don't even look my way," Sanders says.

"I'm a two-way player, but defensive back is feeding my family. Receiver's going to give 'em some snacks."

"A quarterback's not going to drop back, look the other way, then look at me," he continues. "When you come at me, you'd better drop back and know that you're coming at me and it'd better be a damn good route because I'm going to be right there."

Right there to make the big play. "I don't think the fear is just that I'm going to pick it off," Sanders says. "The fear is that once I get it, you know there's a hell of a percentage that it's going to go back. And after I take it back, you know I'm going to dance."

It's a natural, almost undeniable progression. It cannot be refuted. Quarterbacks know he's the best and so does Deion. Fox NFL analyst John Madden believes Sanders is the most dangerous defensive weapon since Lawrence Taylor. "Deion is the first player to be able to dominate and dictate a game from the defensive-back position," Madden says.

Cowboys defensive-backs coach Mike Zimmer explains that, aside from intimidation, speed is what sets Sanders apart from the other cornerbacks in the league. "He's got such great speed that when he's behind a guy, he's not really beaten," Zimmer says. "And the other thing is he's really smart. People don't give him enough credit for being smart. He's aware of formations and he studies film quite a bit. When he plays bump-and-run, he never gives a receiver the same look twice, he's got great lateral quickness at the line of scrimmage, and he's got great hand strength. And, of course, the great speed on top of all that."

Clearly, Deion possesses all the physical tools, but what makes him the best? There are corners who can run as fast as Deion. There are corners who are as big as Deion. What's your secret, Deion?

"I can't give away what I do," Sanders answers sardonically. "You know, it's like Bruce Lee, or a magician, and you're asking me to give away my tricks."

A minute later, Deion begins to break down his game. "It's instinct. It's knowing the game. People think I don't study because I make it look easy. People think I don't know the guys, people think I don't know situations. I know situations. I watch that guy come out of the huddle. I pretty much have a grasp of what that guy is going to do before the ball is snapped based on what the situation is, what the down and distance is. I know the game of football.

"If you know the game, know your strengths, weaknesses and situations and then top that off with some pretty good athletic skills, you've got a hell of a combination."

Deion Sanders: one hell of a combination.

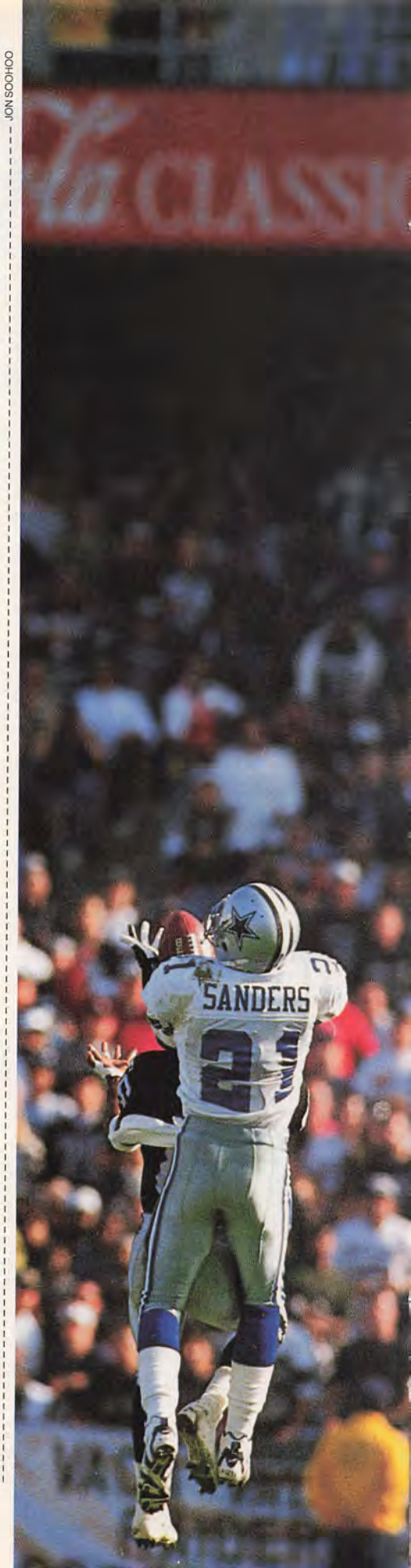
And that same combination that has made Sanders the best defensive back in football gives him the potential to reach that level as a wide receiver. Throw in a few long punt returns and you've got yourself the most valuable player in the league.

"Aw, man, I don't know about MVP," says Sanders. "I might be the most *exciting* player. You could call me the MEP, but not MVP. MVP would be a great honor, but that's for my peers to decide."

Those same peers who left Sanders off last year's NFC Pro Bowl team may not be able to ignore him this year. Prime Time fully intends to work overtime through the Super Bowl and would be happy to continue playing cornerback and wide receiver for one more week in Honolulu. He wants to give the kids something to dream about, but Sanders has his own dreams as well.

"It's always been my dream to light up the stage, man. I want to do everything I can for my team, even if that means never coming off the field." ★

Catch 21: If Sanders the receiver has half the impact of Sanders the DB, he'll walk away an MVP.



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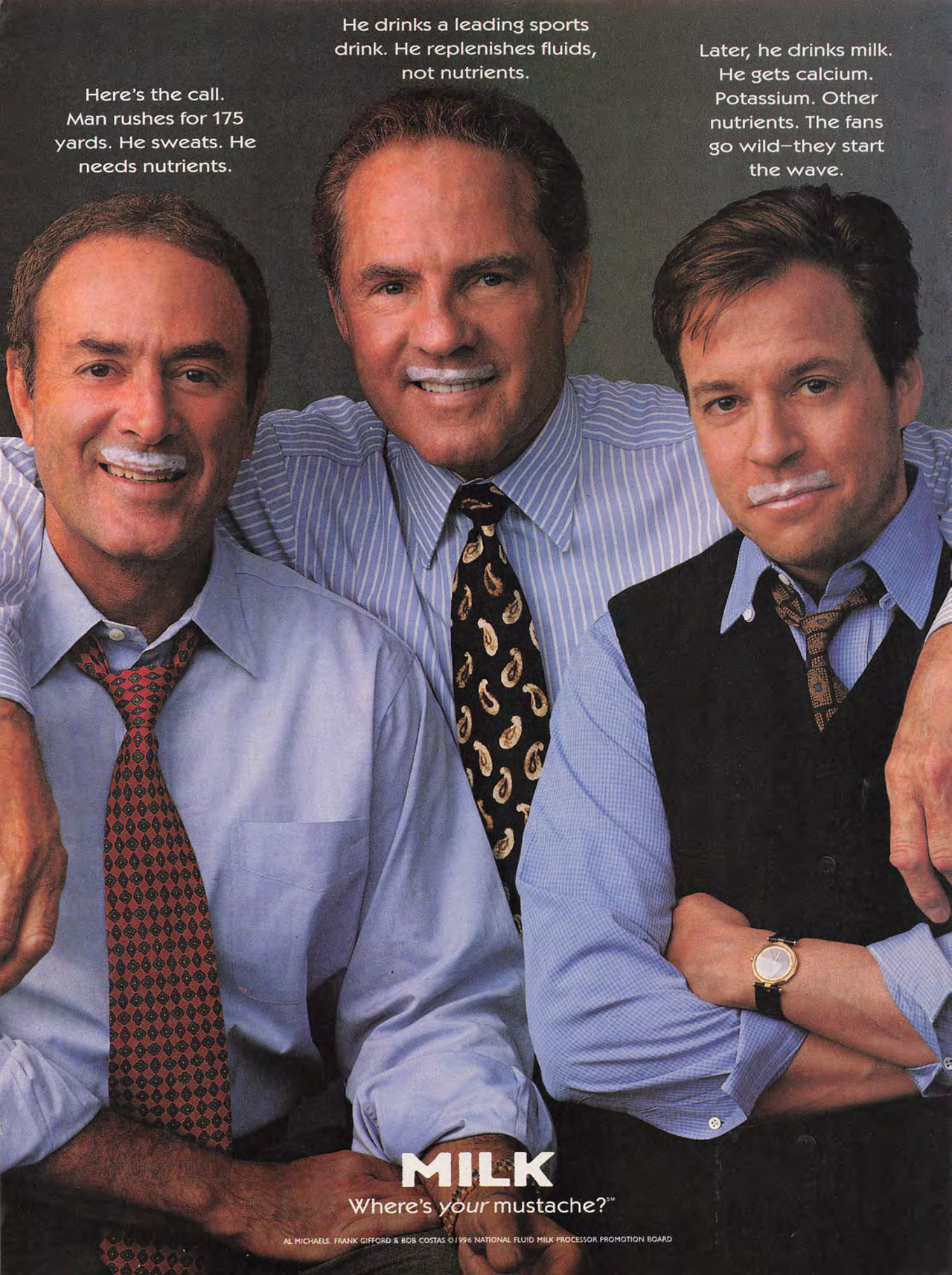
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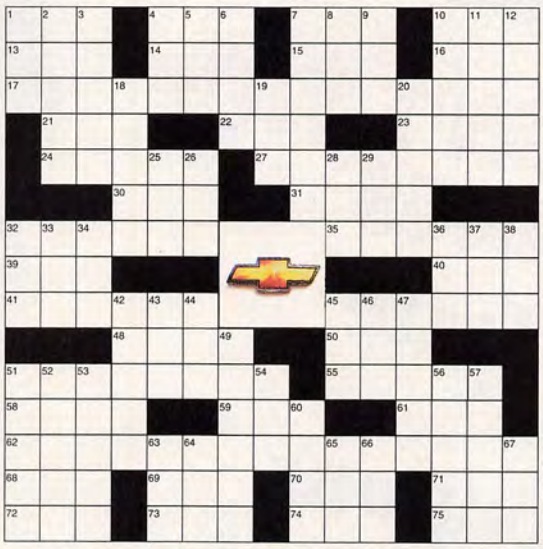
By Stanley Newman



Across

1. Rap star ___ Pounder
4. Business firms: abbr.
7. First half of an inning
10. America's Cup race locale, at times
13. Taunting cry
14. Gold, to Ballesteros
15. Bugner beater in '75
16. He succeeded Casey as Mets manager
17. Stanley Cup winners in '95: 3 wds.
21. Compete
22. Part of ACC: abbr.
23. Like some stances
24. Full playing seasons
27. Gene Hackman basketball film of '86
30. League with a Stern boss
31. College military group: abbr.
32. Hits a short putt: 2 wds.
35. AL batting champ in '93
39. Imperfect, as clothing: abbr.
40. Randy Gradishar's school: abbr.
41. Onetime PGA clambake host
45. Former Oilers coach
48. Cartilage injury
50. From ___ Z: 2 wds.
51. American gold-medal diver in the '32 Olympics
55. NFL Coach of the Year in '68
58. Page enshrined in Canton
59. Gator Bowl month: abbr.
61. Capture
62. Unassisted triple play maker in '92: 2 wds.
68. New Year's ___ (bowl-game day)
69. Honey handler
70. Spahn stat
71. Third man in the ring
72. Charles Ruffing
73. First name of the first American League president
74. Witty person
75. Sports-medicine specialists: abbr.

Down

1. Against
2. "THE MOST DEPENDABLE, LONGEST-LASTING TRUCKS"
3. '40s pitcher Pollet
4. Ovett rival
5. NHL star at 18
6. Expos reliever of the '70s
7. Linebacker with a two-letter nickname
8. "___ Reliable" (Tommy Henrich)
9. ___ alley (bowler's easy lane)
10. Steal, as a base
11. Kind of fisherman
12. PBA and PGA: abbr.
18. Beliveau's namesakes
19. Ordinal suffix
20. ___ of the Yankees (Mel Allen)
25. One of Ruth's 2204
26. ___ Antonio Spurs
28. Hockey-shutout box score
29. L.A.'s successor in the AFC
32. ___-tac-toe
33. Incoming airplane: abbr.
34. Nicklaus became one in '62
36. Laver or Gilbert
37. Put to work
38. Expected to come out of a slump
42. Play very badly
43. Trifecta, for instance
44. Revered Red Sox nickname
45. Faux ___ (minor mistake)
46. Part of NCAA: abbr.
47. 18 holes, or 3 minutes in the ring
49. St. John's team's former name
51. Crucial hit
52. Not yet out of it
53. Fixed one's sneakers
54. Prefix meaning "new"
56. Walking-race superstar
57. General Doubleday
60. Rowing sport
63. Recede
64. Thumbs-up vote
65. Coach Parseghian
66. No-good horse
67. "No ___, ands or buts!"

See page 41 for Chevrolet Truck SPORTword Puzzle answers.

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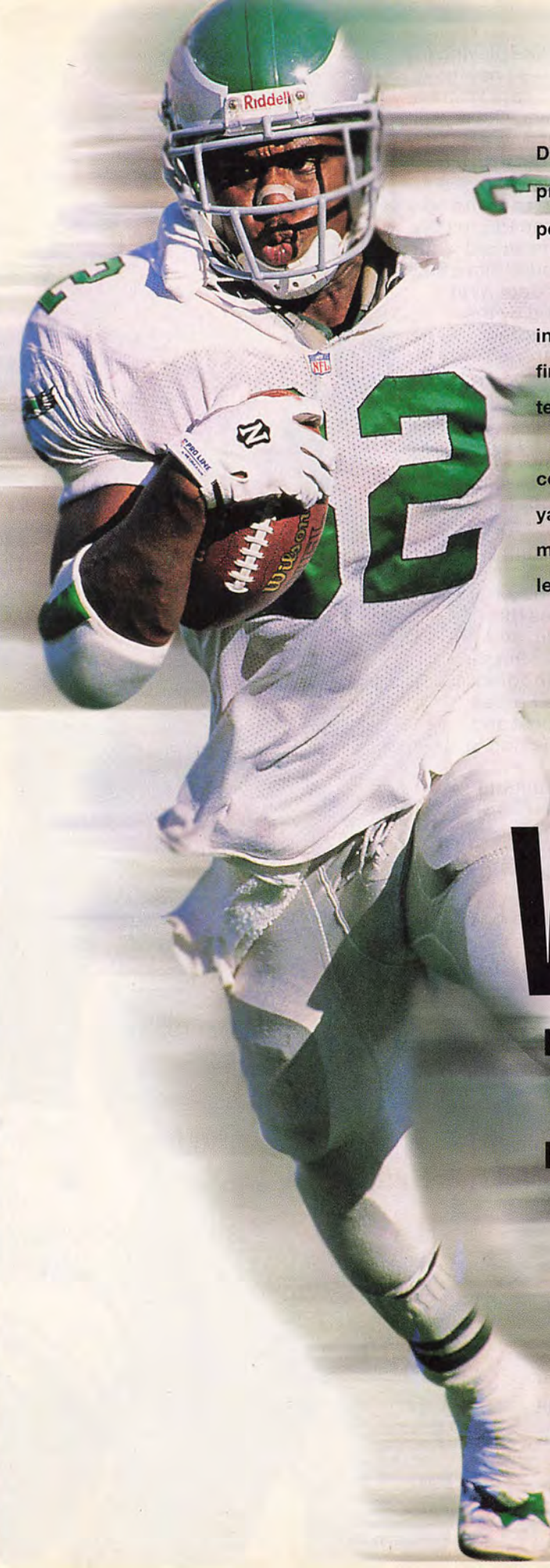

JAMIE SQUIRE/ALLSPORT

running watters

RICKY WATTERS SCAMPERED FROM 'FRISCO TO PHILLY, WHERE (FOR THE MOST PART) HE'S LET HIS GAME DO THE TALKING/By Dan Dieffenbach

DID RUNNING BACK RICKY WATTERS STOP SHORT OF proving to the San Francisco 49ers, his former team, the importance of running Watters last season?

Not if you ask him.

"I wanted to prove I wasn't just doing well on a great team in a great system and I think I did that," says Watters of his first year with the Philadelphia Eagles. "Next year, I'll be better than last."

How can you argue? Watters, who accounted for 36 percent of the Eagles' offense, was fourth in the NFL with 1,707 yards from scrimmage and seventh in rushing with 1,273. He matured a Philadelphia team destined for a losing season, leading the Eagles to 10 wins and a postseason upset of the

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MITCHELL LAYTON

Detroit Lions.

"Early on, it was like playing for an expansion team—33 new guys, new coaching staff," says Watters. "Even the go-to guys, like myself and Rodney Peete, were new guys. It was hard to get a rhythm."

And even harder to get respect.

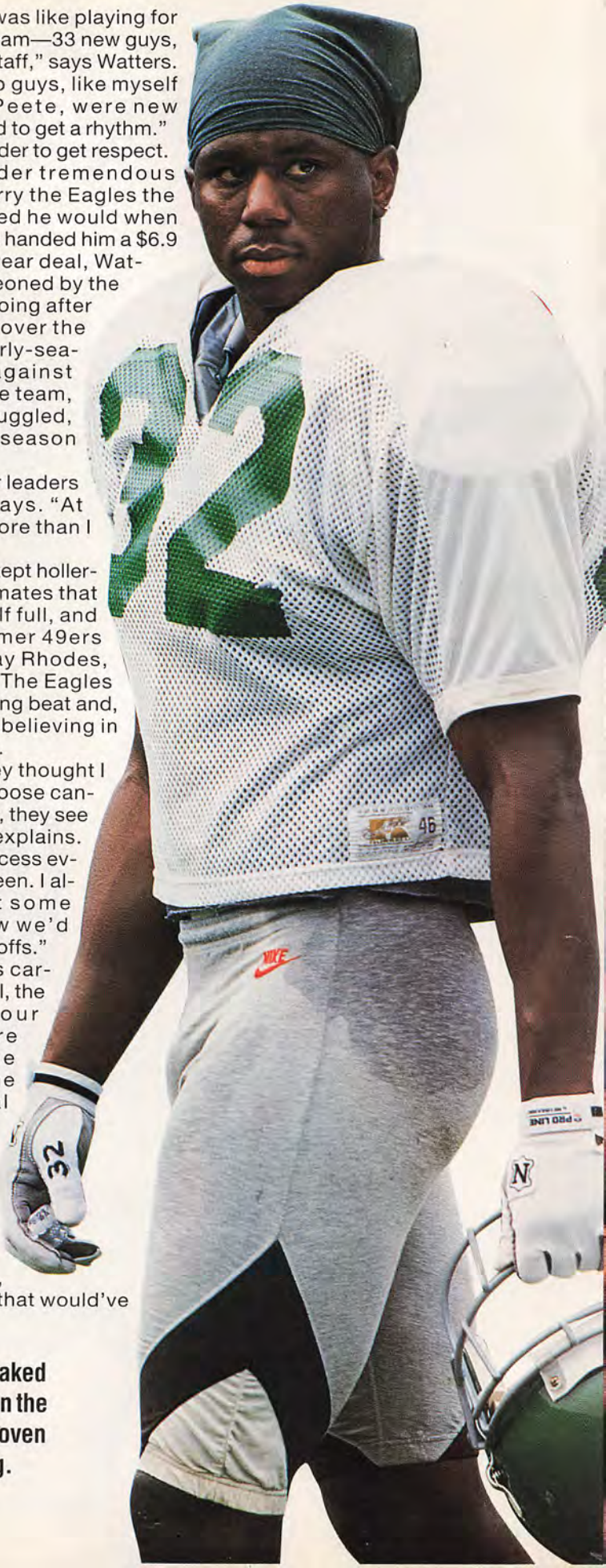
Already under tremendous pressure to carry the Eagles the way he promised he would when owner Jeff Lurie handed him a $6.9 million, three-year deal, Watters was bludgeoned by the media for not going after a pass thrown over the middle in an early-season blowout against Tampa Bay. The team, meanwhile, struggled, beginning the season 1-3.

"Some of our leaders gave up," he says. "At times, it was more than I could handle."

But Watters kept hollering at his teammates that the cup was half full, and his coach, former 49ers coordinator Ray Rhodes, kept plugging. The Eagles got tired of getting beat and, at last, started believing in running Watters.

"Whether they thought I was crazy or a loose cannon or whatever, they see now," Watters explains. "I've been a success everywhere I've been. I always felt that some way, somehow we'd get into the playoffs."

With Watters carrying the football, the Eagles won four straight before losing to the Cowboys in the NFC divisional playoff game last year. The Eagles might just as easily have faced the 49ers in that divisional playoff matchup, and how sweet that would've



Watters, who leaked down to No. 45 in the '91 draft, has proven his critics wrong.

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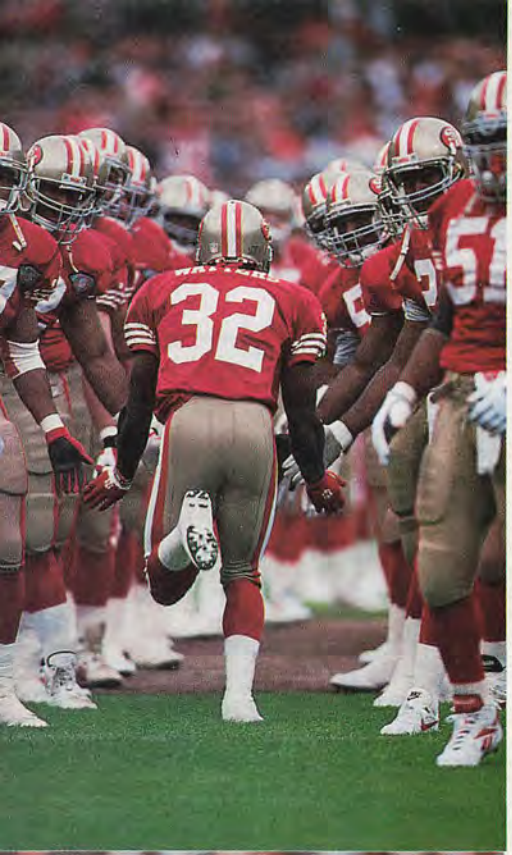

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been for Watters, who played his first three seasons by the Bay.

"I dreamt about getting off against the 49ers, especially scoring the game-winner," Watters admits. "That would've been more than a dream come true, but I never would've rubbed it in their faces."

Highly touted out of Notre Dame, Watters also was highly scrutinized for his flashy nature. Forty-four players were taken ahead of him in the 1991 draft, but Watters never has been one to doubt his ability.

He's a student of the game. "I studied the running backs," he says. "I loved Tony Dorsett, with his spin moves and stayin' low. He wasn't a big guy, but he would get through the holes. And Walter Payton always gave the defense something different—a stiff-arm, kick and over the top, or the spin move. I watched all those things. The more you know the game, the better you can be."

Noted for soft hands out of the backfield and a churning, powerful running style, Watters landed right in the smooth palm of football's best franchise, the 49ers. He rushed for big yardage, caught tight spirals from Steve Young and learned the reception game from Jerry Rice. Nobody could quite understand how this was not nirvana for Watters.

"Why would I want to leave a championship team and an offense that would rank as one of the best ever and that I was a big part of?" Watters even asks.

After scoring three touchdowns in the 49ers' Super Bowl win over the San Diego Chargers, Watters and his agent, Blaine Pollack, *told* San Francisco owner Carmen Policy that the sum was $2.2 million per season. Only the length of the deal—three or five years—was up for discussion. The 49ers backed off, partly because nobody pushes around the Red and Gold and partly because the salary-cap geniuses were up to their ears in big contracts. So Watters walked.

"It feels kind of weird sitting here wearing all this Philadelphia green," he admits. "I never would've thought this would have happened.

"We'd just won the Super Bowl and I scored three touchdowns. Why would you want to break that up? It doesn't make sense to me. Fact of the matter is, I felt they didn't want me back."

Although Watters tries to convince you that it wasn't an ego thing, he believes he should be among the top five highest-paid running backs in football. Watters' old San Francisco teammates called him out because rumors had circulated that the 49ers were just a few hundred-thousand off the mark, a pittance in today's game.

Watters says his relationship with 49ers players is mended and goes so far as to say that Rice and Young claim their missing ingredient last season was this: Just add Watters.

"It's unanimous. They all agree that if I was still there, we would've won the whole thing," Watters says, throwing up his hands. "That's what is really important, how they feel."

They being the players, not the management and coaching staff that wouldn't let Watters develop into the halfback position for which he had grown big and strong. Ricky has made it clear that he isn't a receiver, he's a running back—better yet, a featured back.

"In San Francisco, they feel like it's the jockey, not the horses," Watters says. "You can't win without the horse. You can put the greatest jockey on a horse that's

"I dreamt about getting off against the 49ers, especially scoring the game-winner. That would've been more than a dream come true."

Though he's run into a few snags, Watters is happy to be the main man in Philly, whereas in 'Frisco he was lost in a talented crowd.

about ready to be shot, and there's no way that horse is going to win."

Sure, Ricky, but....

"The system didn't make Jerry Rice. Didn't make Steve Young or Joe Montana. Joe Montana made the system, Roger Craig, myself," Watters continues. "Obviously, they've got good coaches and a great system, but I felt I was a horse. And I was getting less carries playing on a passing team and really couldn't get as strong as I could in that system. I had to adapt to that system. They were like, 'We're the 49ers and you're going to fit in.' "

His replacement, Derek Loville, never quite fit, and the 49ers are still searching, after two seasons, for another Watters.

"I think these teams are going in different directions," he says. "There's no doubt Philly is going up and up."

Yeah, but the 49ers are championship caliber....

"The only problem I had with them—and they let me know I was their running back—they could've done some things to show some loyalty to the players, like say this guy is kind of big and fast, so let's set him up in the I-formation every once in a while."

At times, Watters offered advice to 49ers coaches, which went over like a Randall Cunningham touch pass. "I know football too," he says.

As a kid growing up in Harrisburg, Pa., Ricky Watters always worked hard to be liked. Most of the kids in Watters' neighborhood didn't have both parents around, but Marie and Jim were always there.

"I was lucky," Watters says, shaking his head.

Grades were always a priority over athletics, although Ricky's father never missed an event that his son participated in, and he was constantly over the boy's shoulder offering tips and at times harsh suggestions.

"My dad would push me and get on my case," Watters says. "If there was something I couldn't do right, he'd have me working. To this day, if I ever have a problem with blocking or something, I'm out there working on it, and that's from him."

Though not as big a fan, Watters' mother travels with Ricky on occasion, having attended the first two of three consecutive Pro Bowls her son was invited to.

"My mom taught me to fight for what I believe in and that there was nothing I couldn't do," says Watters.

He works at football not only because he wants to be the best, but because a constant fear attacks him when he thinks about not being able to perform.

So Watters has been uncovered. He's a tad insecure, a tad arrogant, with a terrific football mind. And, yes, he still spends the off-season in San Francisco.

"There's misconception all around the board," he says. "People are usually nothing like you thought. The fans may not ever get that chance to get to know me, and the whole time they're thinking this is some arrogant guy making money. I give to charity, give out turkeys at Thanksgiving, but you never hear about it. I don't do it for the publicity. I'm not the type of person to call up and say I'm giving out the turkeys, make sure you get this."

Watters goes on to tell a similar story about the vicious linebacker from Pittsburgh, Greg Lloyd.

"I thought he was evil," Watters says, "but I met him and he's a great guy. He just comes through like that on the field. He's a linebacker and he's supposed to be that way, but he's cool."

Cool to the fans and media isn't all Watters is about. He is about being a craftsman.

"I'll go up to Emmitt [Smith] and ask him how he runs to certain holes, and I learn a little something from Barry [Sanders] and Marshall Faulk. That makes you a better player," he explains. "If I get to be the best player, you know why. It sure wasn't because I was arrogant, it was because I learned the game."

Experience and enthusiasm is a tough combination to beat, and Watters knows it. He can stiff-arm with the strong backs, turn the corner with the blast backs and charge up the middle with the fat backs. And he's constantly on the move, showing people the importance of running Watters.

"I always feel like I have so much I want to prove, but now I've learned how to handle things," Watters says. "If you want to call it maturity, then that's what I have. I've learned how to take a step back." ★

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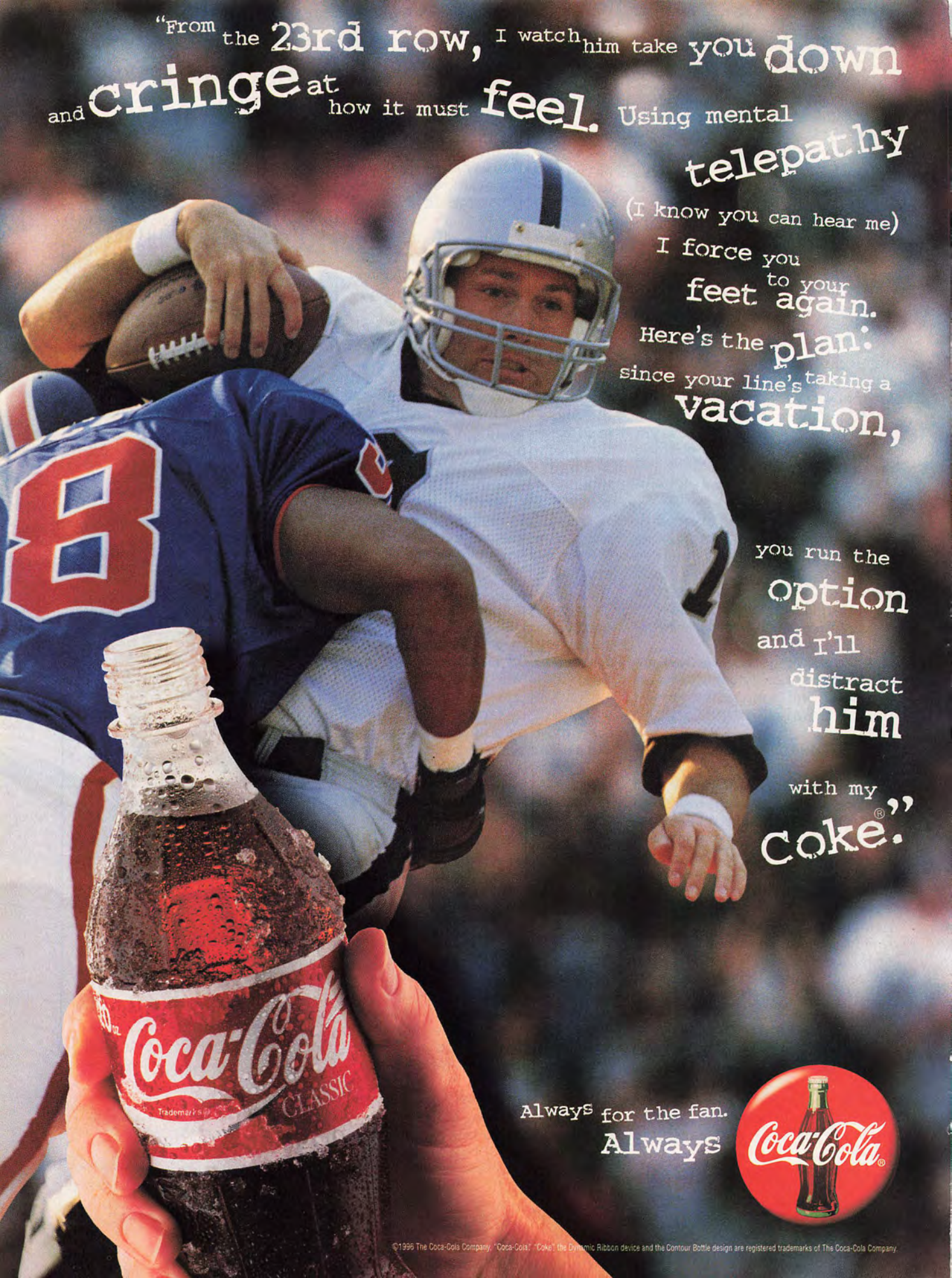

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Looking For A Title

The 49ers Defense Has No Catchy Nickname, Just the Most Dominant Unit in the League/By Darryl Howerton

Had "Neon" Deion "Prime Time" Sanders spent more than four months in the City by the Bay, you can bet his $35 million Cowboys contract that the 49ers defense would have a nickname by now.

Something catchy. Something flashy. Something like "The Gold Chains," or "The Neon Kneebreakers" or "The Bay City Steamrollers." Something befitting the NFL's No. 1 defense, which is a notch higher than the No. 2 rating the Niners maintained when Sanders sported a red bandanna two seasons ago.

Sanders is no longer in San Francisco. But as the peerless performance of the 49ers defense without him would attest, this alias-less unit is getting along just fine, thank you.

The evidence is in the numbers. Sans Sanders in '95, the Niners had the top-rated rushing defense, red-zone defense and overall defense, and had the most interceptions, forced turnovers, defensive touchdowns, side-

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line struts and goal-post pummellings. If any team was deserving of a nickname, it was these Niners.

"The press was really trying to come up with one for us," says inside linebacker Ken Norton Jr. "They came up with something like 'Fort Knox,' but it really didn't stick. We do need a nickname.

"I was thinking of one the other day. Tell me what you think: 'The Golden Gate Defense.' You know, when you think of San Francisco, you think of the bridge?"

Not enough pizzazz, Champ. You need something that'll live forever. Something along the lines of "The Steel Curtain," "Purple People Eaters," "Fearsome Foursome"—monikers that made quarterbacks tremble. History shows that your great defenses have titles that symbolize strength, fortitude and invulnerability, a nickname like "The Rock," for instance. That symbolizes toughness, while also having ties to San Francisco.

" 'The Rock'? You mean after the movie?" asks Norton.

Yeah, the movie that takes place on San Francisco's own Alcatraz, the once-in-escapable prison by the Bay.

"I don't know," Norton says. "We might seem like a bunch of convicts if we're named after Alcatraz. You could give that nickname to the Cowboys, though."

If not "The Rock," then what? How 'bout a defense that's hard-hittin' like "Twister," that'll take you out like "Eraser," that's tough to figure like "Mission: Impossible," that's craftier than "The Nutty Professor."...

OK, maybe we're getting desperate, but these guys need a nickname. How else could we convey to our grandchildren that these Niners had one of the great defenses of all time? No team stuffs the run like the 49ers, who allowed 3.0 yards per rush and 66 rushing yards per game last year, both league lows by far. And no team snuffs the pass as well either; this unit led the league in interceptions (26), fewest yards per pass (5.85) and lowest passing rating (64.1). Yet these numbers, comparable with some of the great defenses of all time, have largely gone unrecognized.

Why?

"Maybe because we didn't win the Super Bowl last year," says the game's best safety, Merton Hanks.

"Maybe because it takes a couple years of playing together to change the media's perception of you," adds linebacker Gary Plummer, the senior member and resident wise man of this defense.

"Maybe it's because we don't have a nickname like the old teams did," says Norton.

Bingo.

But when it comes to christening these guys with a moniker, the Niners are 100-percent Teflon. Nicknames stick around here about as long as baseball-playing cornerbacks. There's no "Playmaker," no "Minister of Defense." Not even a "Moose."

Marquez Pope, the heavy-hitting cornerback, was known in Los Angeles as the "Pounding Pontiff" when he played for the Rams in 1994. When he came to San Francisco, the tag disappeared in the Bay Area fog. These are guys who refer to each other as "Mert" (Merton Hanks), "Plum" (Gary Plummer), "Stubby" (Dana Stubblefield). The name "Stubby" evokes about as much fear as Bambi. Or Tweety. Or McNeeley.

We need a working title for this work of art in progress at 3Com Park. You've heard of the "No-Name Defense," made a *household* name by the undefeated 1972 Dolphins. Meet the "No-Nickname Defense," where monikers have about as much of a life span as opposing coaches' offensive game plans.

"We may not have a nickname, but with the personnel we have, I think we're a defensive coordinator's dream," says Hanks.

Their peers know their names well enough to have voted six of the 11 starters to past Pro Bowls. Two others—Bryant Young and Pope—should get serious consideration this year, while Plummer and Roy Barker more than hold their own. And don't forget new starting left cornerback Tyronne Drakeford, who tied Hanks for the team lead in inter-

Tim McDonald (46) and the 49ers' no-nickname defense will collide with more greatness in '96.

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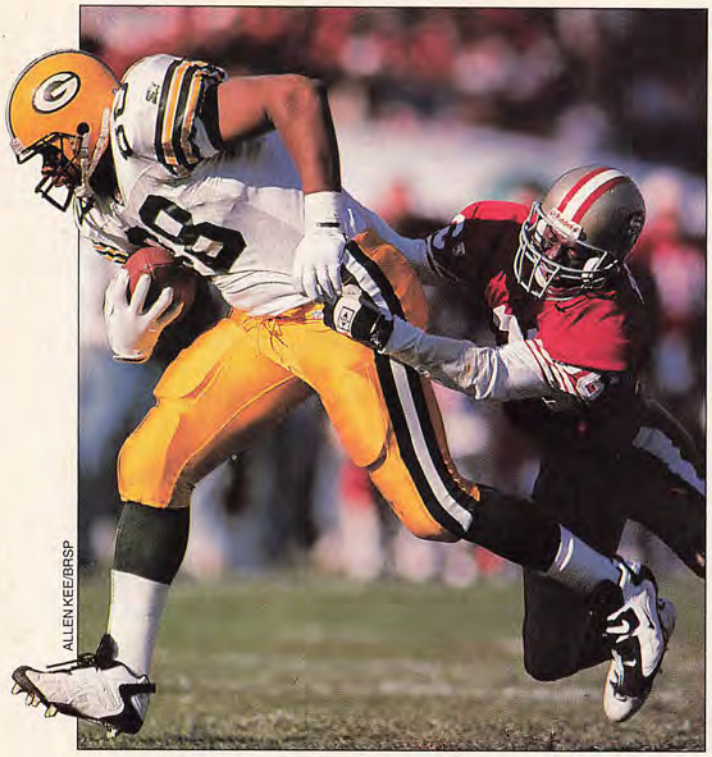


ALLEN KEE/BRSP

PAUL JASIENSKI

Merton Hanks (left) and Ken Norton Jr. are right in the middle of a defense strong up the gut.

ceptions with five and has huge upside, but who, because of his gambling style of play, often was burned in the regular-season finale by Atlanta's Eric Metcalf.

If it's possible to improve on No. 1, these Niners look primed to do so.

"Word's getting around," says Norton. "Guys around the league came up to me all the time over the summer and said, 'Man, y'all really can play defense.' Guys like Carnell Lake and Reggie White are saying that. Some guys say their coaches take our tapes and use them as a tool to teach defense."

The craze around the league is trying to build a unit like the one 49ers defensive coordinator Jim Carroll has.

Stubblefield and Young, because of their size (302 and 275 pounds, respectively) and talent (best tandem in the NFL), are the tackle cornerstones that make the Niners' defense work. Their job is to push the middle of the pocket, stack the inside running game and make it possible for the linebackers and defensive backs behind them to make big plays.

"It's a sacrifice because in the past I've been used to being The Man, leading the team in sacks," says Stubblefield. "Now I'm doing my job, but I'm on the bottom of the pile."

"Teams love to attack defensive tackles, but they can't do that with us," says Plummer. "They hold their ground to where it takes three 340-pound linemen to move these two guys, which makes it easy for us to come in and make the big plays. Nobody has a tackle tandem like we do."

Though not for lack of effort. The team on the other side of the bridge, the Oakland Raiders, went out and got Russell Maryland to complement Chester McGlockton. Cardinal Eric Swann was involved in almost as many trade rumors over the summer as Charles Barkley. It seems everybody is trying to copy the 49ers' blueprint.

But you can't duplicate the results, unless you have a half-dozen more Pro Bowl players at other positions. That's what enables the 49ers to make the tackles, create the interceptions, force the fumbles, return the turnovers for touchdowns.

It starts with foundation and ends in flash.

"Sooner or later," says Hanks, "teams have to put the ball in the air against us because, No. 1, they can't run; No. 2, our offense is putting too many points on the board. The other team has to play catch-up.

"Not only do we have a great defense, but our offense really helps us," Hanks continues. "That's why we've been able to lead the league in interceptions two years in a row."

"We have a lot of style," says Norton. "It's not just three yards and a cloud of dust. We do things that aren't boring. People don't just want to come and see Jerry Rice and Steve Young anymore. Now the fans want to watch the defense too."

It's a tribute to its greatness that the San Francisco defense took the blame for the 27-17 playoff loss last season to the Green Bay Packers. Truth be known, the defense only allowed two touchdowns in that game; it was the offense that turned the ball over four times—one fumble resulting in a 31-yard touchdown return and another setting up a chippie field goal.

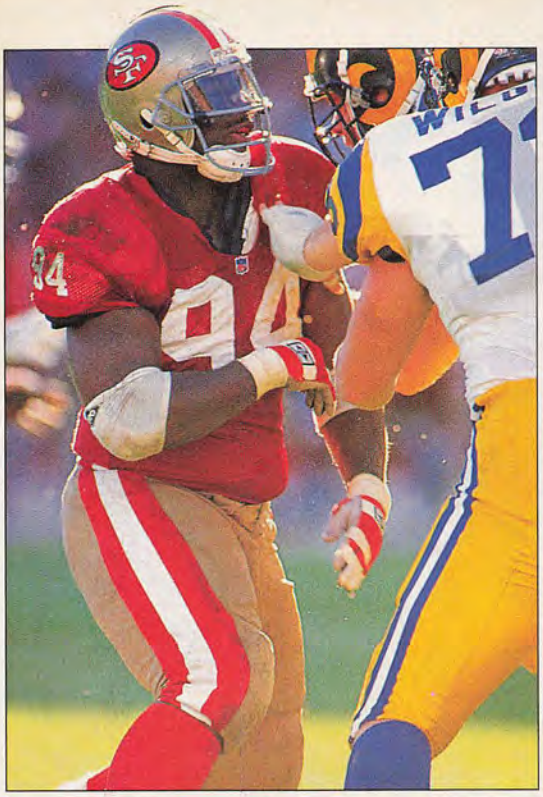
"We played poorly that game," admits Plummer. "If there's a silver lining to the cloud, that's it. That's our motivation to be even better this year."

A scary thought. As the 49ers defense has proven, sometimes catchy nicknames aren't needed. Sometimes, as in the case of The No-Nickname Defense, the play speaks for itself.

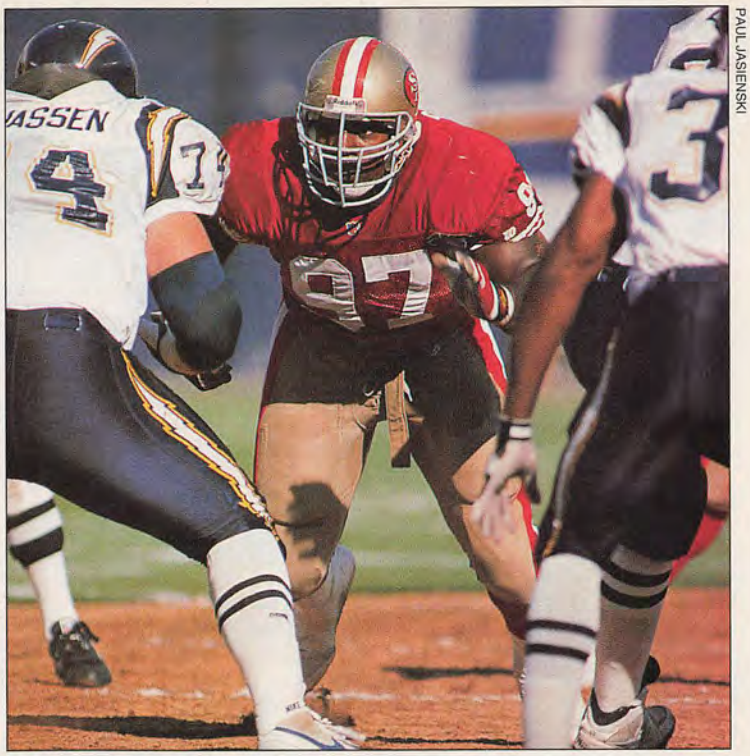
HEART OF SAN FRANCISCO

Deion Sanders may have taken the nicknames with him, but the heart of San Francisco remains.

"You build a defense by keeping



ALLEN KEE/BRSP



PAUL JASIENSKI

The success of the Niners' D starts with Pro Bowl tackles Dana Stubblefield and Bryant Young.

the heart intact," says Norton. "You look at our two tackles, two inside linebackers, two safeties—that's right up the middle of the defense and that's where we're strongest."

Those six starters—four of whom made the Pro Bowl last season—remain from the Niners' Super Bowl XXIX championship team. Who knows? Five may make it this season. Therein lies the secret to San Francisco's success—the very heart of the team.

THE CENTER SIX

LT **Bryant Young, 24**
Will be a Pro Bowl regular from here on out. "I look at him and ask, 'How am I gonna keep up with this guy?' " says fellow tackle Dana Stubblefield.

RT **Dana Stubblefield, 25**
Two-time Pro Bowler. The No. 5 defensive tackle in the game, according to NFL experts surveyed in the August issue of SPORT. "Stubby puts fear into a lot of different offenses," says teammate Lee Woodall.

ILB **Ken Norton Jr., 29**
Two-time Pro Bowl player. Has become very comfortable in defensive scheme. "He's always studying game films, trying to make himself even better," says fellow inside linebacker Gary Plummer.

ILB **Gary Plummer, 36**
"There must not be enough spaces at the Pro Bowl because he's deserving," says teammate Hanks. "This guy shows up and plays great every Sunday."

SS **Tim McDonald, 31**
Six-time Pro Bowler. "One of the great safeties of all time," says Hanks. Complements Hanks well—plays run and anticipates plays extremely well.

FS **Merton Hanks, 28**
Two-time Pro Bowler. The No. 1 safety in the game, according to SPORT's survey of NFL experts. Complements McDonald well—covers pass like a center fielder and gets to plays.

THE FRINGE FIVE

That's not to say the outside position players are any less important. There are Pro Bowl performers here too. It's just that more Niners have come and gone at the outside positions—ends, cornerbacks and outside linebackers—than the center positions (see Sanders, Eric Davis, Rickey Jackson, Dennis Brown).

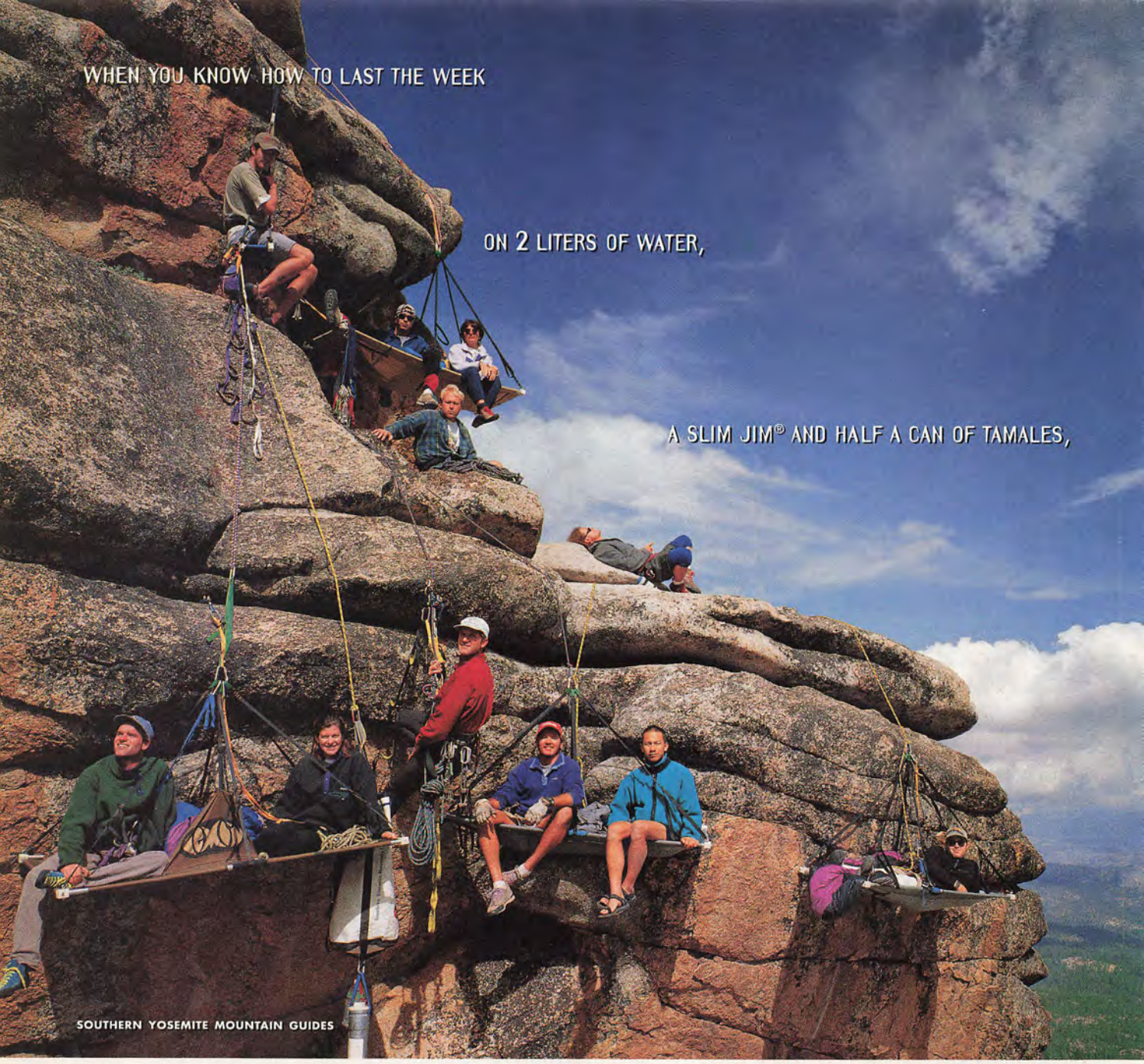
LE **Roy Barker, 27**
Was a Viking last year. Solid in every aspect of the game.

RE **Chris Doleman, 34**
Six-time Pro Bowl player, but hasn't been to Honolulu since 1993 season. Was a Falcon last year. The No. 5 defensive end in the game, according to SPORT's survey of NFL experts.

OLB **Lee Woodall, 26**
Made the Pro Bowl for the first time last season. Mistake-free player who lived up to potential last year. Good chase-and-cover guy.

LCB **Tyronne Drakeford, 25**
The Niners' nickel back last year, he was the one question mark. "Teams are coming after me," says Drakeford, "but I think I've shown I can make the plays when given the chance." Worked out extensively in June with the man he replaces, Eric Davis, who now plays for Carolina.

RCB **Marquez Pope, 25**
Was a question mark last year, but answered critics with an exclamation point. Now he's making plans for Hawaii in February as the fifth Niners DB to play in the Pro Bowl since '95. ★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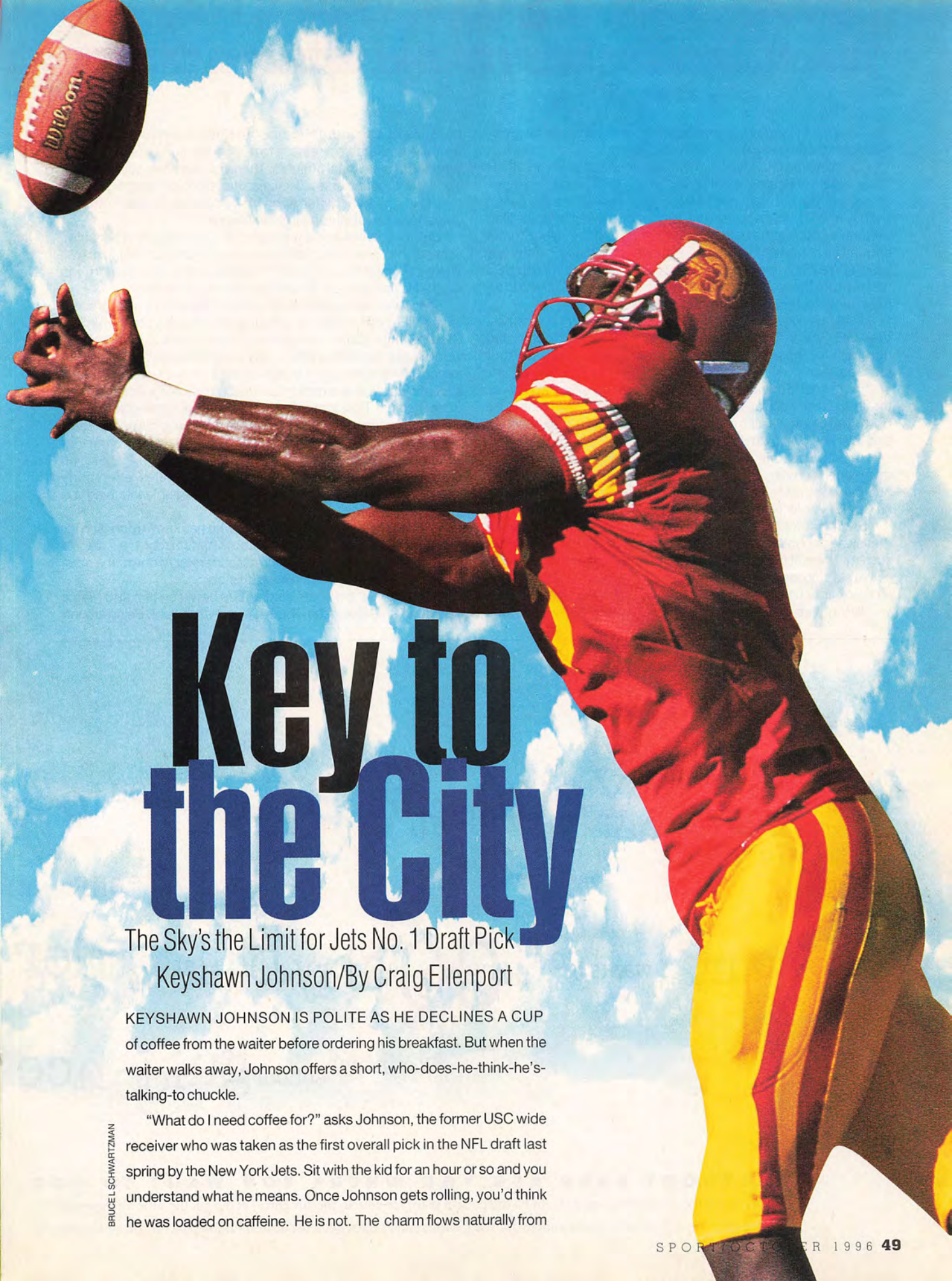

Key to the City

The Sky's the Limit for Jets No. 1 Draft Pick Keyshawn Johnson/By Craig Ellenport

KEYSHAWN JOHNSON IS POLITE AS HE DECLINES A CUP of coffee from the waiter before ordering his breakfast. But when the waiter walks away, Johnson offers a short, who-does-he-think-he's-talking-to chuckle.

"What do I need coffee for?" asks Johnson, the former USC wide receiver who was taken as the first overall pick in the NFL draft last spring by the New York Jets. Sit with the kid for an hour or so and you understand what he means. Once Johnson gets rolling, you'd think he was loaded on caffeine. He is not. The charm flows naturally from

BRUCE L SCHWARTZMAN

Keyshawn Johnson doesn't lack for confidence, and he carries that swagger both

the 24-year-old Los Angeles native who seemed destined for greatness from the time he was a ballboy at USC.

His story has been well-publicized. Johnson grew up on the mean streets of South Central Los Angeles. He got into some gang-related trouble, but managed to steer clear from the worst of it. As a ballboy at USC, Johnson used to carry around helmets for the likes of Ronnie Lott, and he befriended assistant coaches Norv Turner and Jeff Fisher, whom he now will play against in the NFL. After two years at West Los Angeles Community College, he returned to USC and rewrote the record books. Johnson had at least 100 yards receiving in 17 of his 23 career games while playing for Troy.

Big-game player? Johnson appeared in two major bowl games, the 1995 Cotton Bowl and the 1996 Rose Bowl. His combined numbers for those two games: 20 receptions, 438 yards, four touchdowns.

"It was pretty obvious how talented he was," says Pat Kirwan, the Jets' director of player administration. "You saw that in the Rose Bowl. You can just watch one football game and you know what we saw over and over again in a two-year period."

In a draft loaded with receiver talent, following a year in which so many receivers enjoyed banner seasons in the NFL, Johnson stood out above the rest—literally. At 6-4, 210 pounds, Johnson fits the new prototype for NFL receivers. And he knows it.

Keyshawn Johnson doesn't lack for confidence, and he carries that swagger both on and off the field, which is what makes him such a perfect fit for the Big Apple. He should have no trouble winning a starting job on an anemic Jets offense, and he should have an even easier time winning fans in the city that never sleeps.

"All the stars were aligned with this one," says Lee Kolligian, one of Johnson's agents. "Here we got Keyshawn coming out, extremely marketable. He went to a program that is very strong in terms of professional athletes. Then you have him going to New York, the largest market." Kolligian has said, with a straight face, that if his star client performs on the field, he could reach Michael Jordan-like popularity on Madison Avenue.

Before he even knew where his NFL future would take him, Johnson had a lucrative deal arranged with Adidas. And the man in charge of marketing Johnson for Adidas is the same person who ran the Bo Jackson and Air Jordan campaigns for Nike.

Johnson made several visits to New York in the weeks preceding the NFL draft in April. He donated his USC jersey to the All-Star Cafe in Times Square. He made an appearance at Planet Hollywood. Last-minute meetings with Jets head coach Rich Kotite forced Johnson to cancel an appearance on the "Regis and Kathy Lee" show as well as a date to take batting practice with the Mets at Shea Stadium. Now that he's a Jet, however, there will be plenty of time for Johnson to enjoy the perks of being a celebrity in New York.

"It's nothing unusual for me now," says Johnson, noting that USC was a good proving ground for future stardom. "It gets you prepared for the fame after. Being in Los Angeles, everybody knows who you are. You kind of get used to people touching you on the shoulder."

USC head coach John Robinson, who has known Johnson for nearly 18 years, agrees that Johnson is perfect for New York. He goes so far as to compare his former superstar to one of the most recognizable personalities in sports history.

"I think there are some similarities between him and Magic Johnson," says Robinson. "Both are very exuberant. Being around

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on and off the field, which is what makes him such a perfect fit for the Big Apple.

people, having fun, is a major part of their needs in life. And like Magic, Keyshawn is a fierce competitor and very clear about his future. He has the ability to enjoy playing the game and also be very competitive."

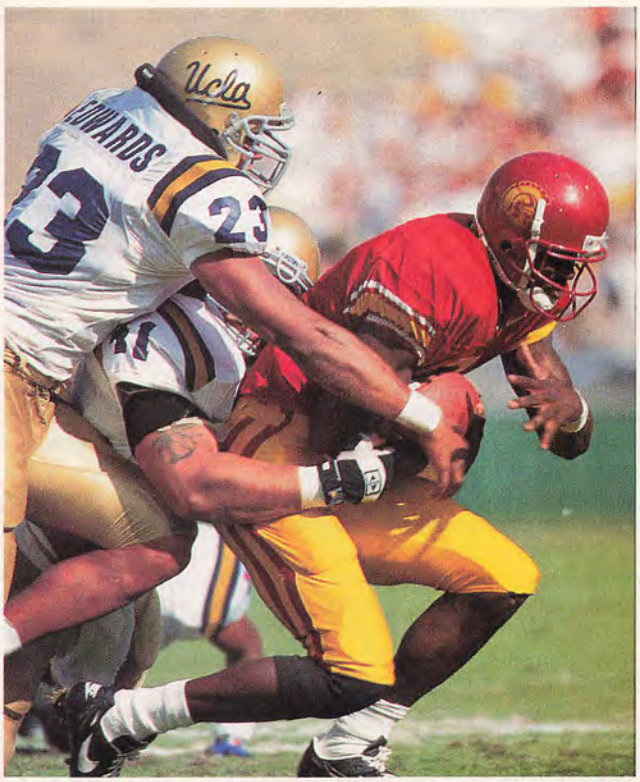
Unlike some other young superstars of today, however, Johnson is more concerned with winning than he is with his image. Are you reading this, Shaquille O'Neal?

"Throughout the whole time I've played sports, I've never been on a losing team," says Johnson. "Every team I've played on, we've always won and I've always done well. We lost games, but we were always there at the end."

Now Johnson faces his toughest challenge, adjusting to the NFL on a team that will be more challenged than others he's been a part of. Despite the Jets' 3-13 record last season, Johnson does not consider himself a savior. "I don't look at this franchise as having to be saved," he says.

The combination of fun and fire is manifested in Johnson's trash-talking, which has become a staple of his game. That won't change now that he's in the NFL, he says. "I'm not somebody that's going to be quiet on the field," says Johnson. "That's just the way it is. If you try to turn me into someone I'm not...no football team or organization that does that is for me."

The Rose Bowl, in which Johnson caught 12 passes for 216 yards and a score, was a perfect example of how Johnson thrives in the spotlight. For weeks leading up to the game, the media focused on Northwestern's Cinderella season. Johnson listened as



GLADEES PRIEUR

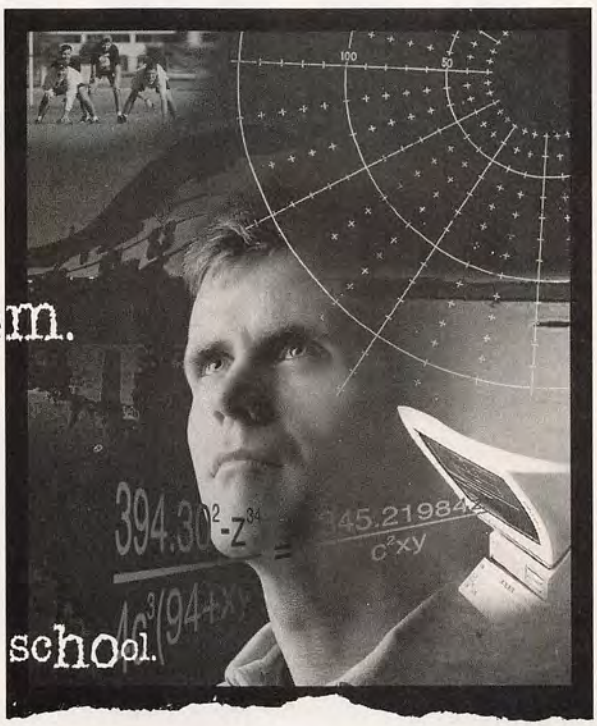
Size and strength were keys to Johnson's USC success.

get A job.

you to go Hang out with them.

college he went to.

counselor wants you to go to tech school.



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AIR FORCE
Aim High

As a ballboy at USC, Johnson carried around helmets for the likes of Ronnie Lott and befriend

the Northwestern defense did most of the talking before the game. The Wildcats' secondary was nationally ranked during the regular season and had put the clamps on some of the nation's best receivers, including Penn State's Bobby Engram and the Michigan duo of Amani Toomer and Mercury Hayes.

"I kind of got quiet against Northwestern," Johnson says. "I just play against guys like that."

That he did. When Northwestern stormed back from a 24-7 deficit to close to within 24-19 midway through the third quarter, Johnson took matters into his own hands. He caught a quick slant from USC quarterback Brad Otton and ran 56 yards for a touchdown. Just like that.

"It was a big highlight because it was the Rose Bowl," says Johnson. "But it was nothing out of the norm."

Nothing out of the norm for Keyshawn Johnson, that is. The man is a human magnet, which explains a few things—like how the football is drawn to his hands so easily. It also explains why children are so drawn to him.

"Kids just flock to him," says Jerome Stanley, Johnson's other agent. "They just sense that they can approach Keyshawn."

At some points during his USC playing days, in fact, Johnson needed a police escort just to avoid the kiddie corps. "So many little rascals," Johnson says, recalling one particular horde in Corvallis, Ore., after a game against Oregon State. "I gave my jersey away at Oregon State. That was a big mistake. They wouldn't let the bus leave."

His fame and personality make Johnson an ideal candidate to be a role model, an optional responsibility that he accepts with a little more zeal than, say, Charles Barkley. It comes with the territory, he says.

"I've got scholarships in my name already. I've done celebrity basketball games. I'm going to have a camp. I'm going to have tons and tons of stuff."

The fact that Johnson overcame growing up in such a violent surrounding gives him that much more authority to speak to children and educate them on the rewards of turning the other cheek. But it's not something he likes to talk about anymore. Some of the stories he could tell, he says, are just too frightening to relate to innocent children. "The worst day I ever had? Kids don't need to hear that."

It didn't take long for the Keyshawn Magnet to take its effect on the New York media. The Jets signed three key free agents in an effort to improve on last year's dismal season—quarterback Neil O'Donnell, wide receiver Jeff Graham, and offensive tackle Jumbo Elliott. But drafting Johnson is the key to the team's future (pun intended).

In early May, the Jets drew the largest media gathering ever for their annual voluntary minicamp. And all eyes were on Johnson. He has the ability to be the most recognizable Jets athlete since Joe Namath. And like Namath, Johnson will be a popular pitchman.

"When the camera's in front of him, he's a natural," says Adidas marketing executive Marc Scales. "What you see in Keyshawn is what you get. He's a very big personality, and he's having fun. He enjoys playing the game."

The Adidas campaign featuring Keyshawn will begin in the fall with several young, up-and-coming athletes, including high school-to-NBA phenom Kobe Bryant. Later in the football season, Adidas will introduce Johnson's own sneaker, the Key Trainer.

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ed assistant coaches Norv Turner and Jeff Fisher, whom he now will play against in the NFL.

"We see Keyshawn as being a leader among the new generation of athletes that not only take their on-the-field job seriously, but take their off-the-field job seriously as well," says Scales.

Don't think it's the "Q rating" that drives Johnson to succeed, however. He's more concerned about the approval of a more important sector of society: the fans.

"I think he'll have fun just with the common fan, the average fan," says Robinson. "Madison Avenue doesn't mean anything to him. He just wants to have a guy that he identifies with and have a feeling that the guy has some appreciation for him."

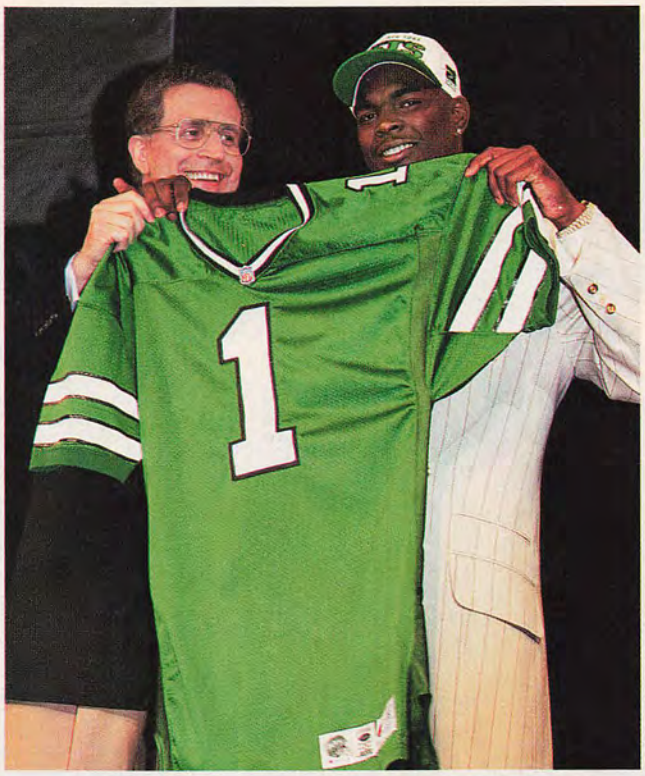
Jets fans who attended the NFL draft in New York showed their appreciation for Johnson immediately, roaring their approval with chants of "Key-shawn! Key-shawn!"

Says Johnson: "Those are my guys. Those are my buddies—the guys with green on their face and no shirt on in zero degrees. Those are the guys I want to hang out with. They love the game. Fans are cool with me. That's why I play best in sold-out games. In big-crowd games, I kill."

The Jets haven't played in many big games of late but expect that Johnson is someone who can put them in position to be in some. If he does, there's no telling how big Johnson's star can become. Yet he doesn't expect it to be easy.

"Nothing was ever a handout," says Johnson. "I had to work for everything."

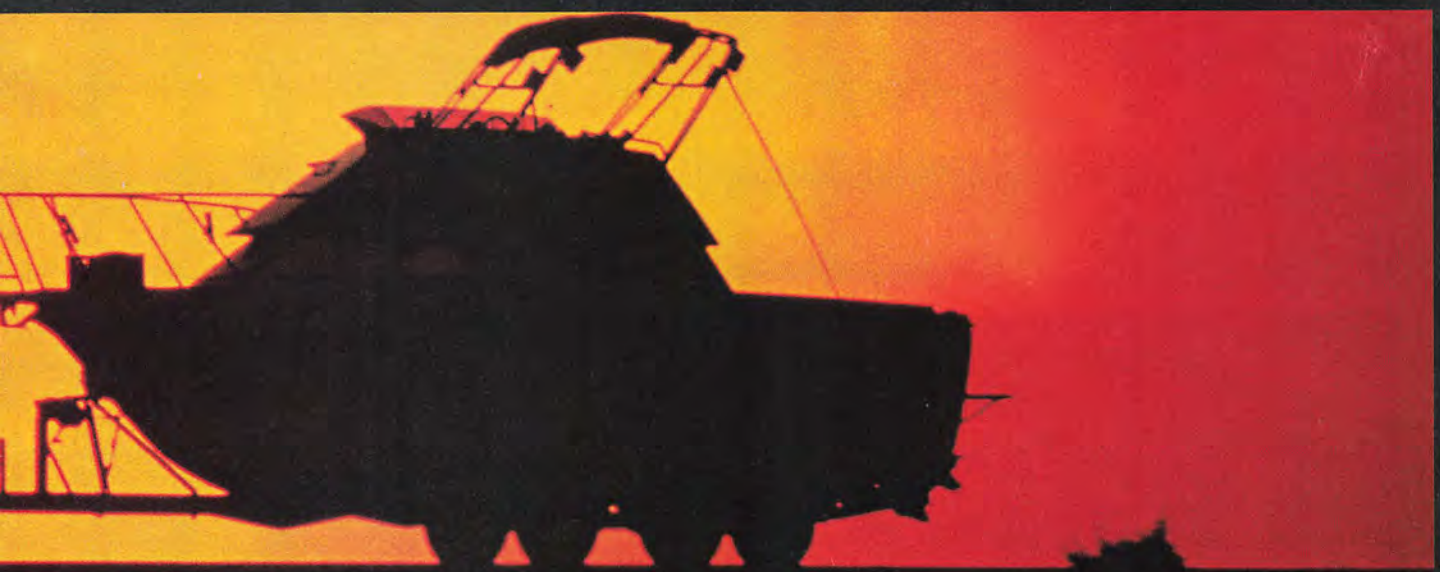
Keyshawn Johnson only makes it look easy. ★



BRUCE L SCHWARTZMAN

Keyshawn indeed will be No. 1 in the Big Apple.

OR BY SEA



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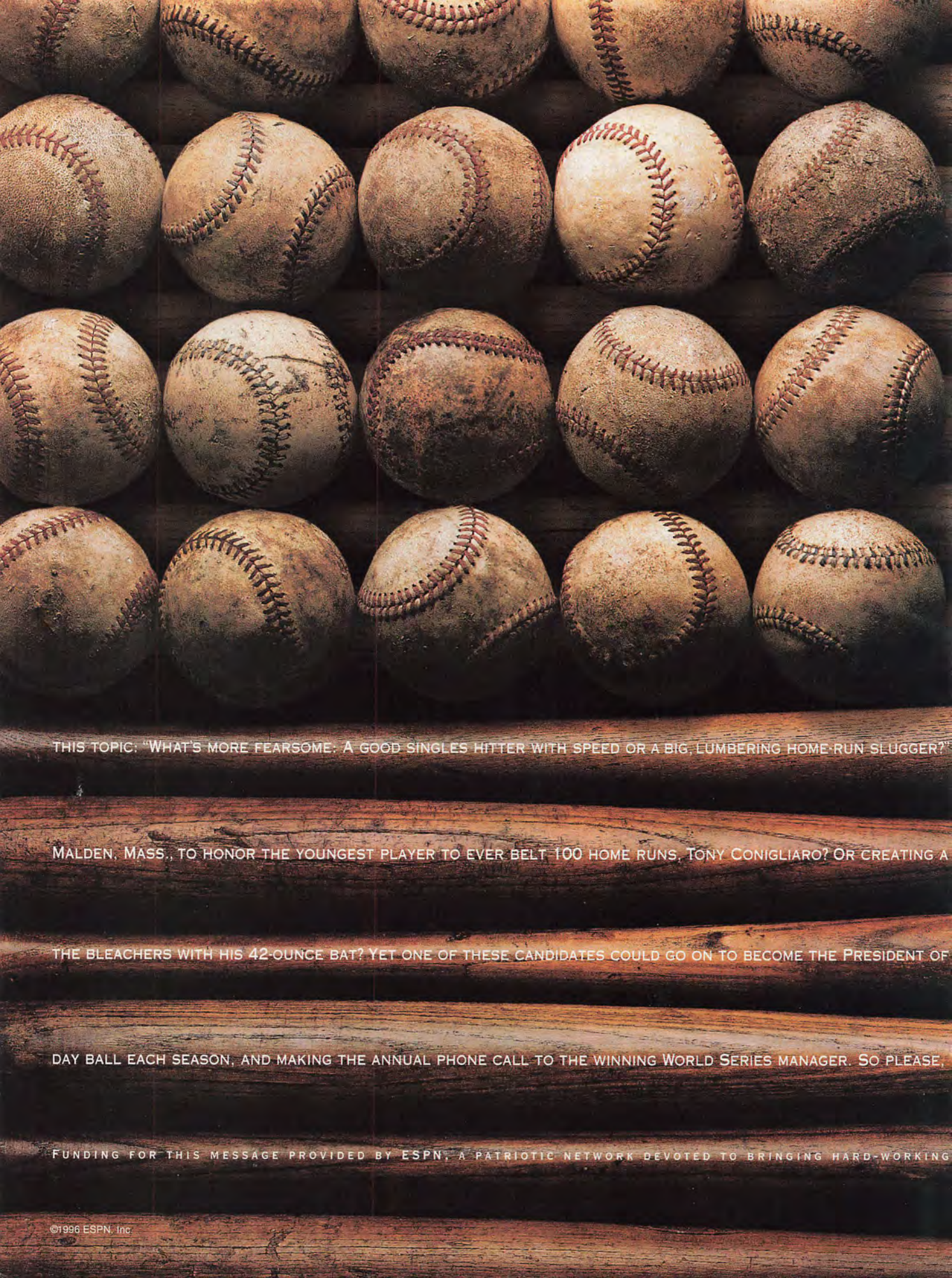
THIS TOPIC: "WHAT'S MORE FEARSOME: A GOOD SINGLES HITTER WITH SPEED OR A BIG, LUMBERING HOME-RUN SLUGGER?"
MALDEN, MASS., TO HONOR THE YOUNGEST PLAYER TO EVER BELT 100 HOME RUNS, TONY CONIGLIARO? OR CREATING A
THE BLEACHERS WITH HIS 42-OUNCE BAT? YET ONE OF THESE CANDIDATES COULD GO ON TO BECOME THE PRESIDENT OF
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THE CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN TALKING FOR MONTHS NOW. THEY'VE DISCUSSED A
BALANCED BUDGET, AND THE PROS AND CONS OF GUNS THAT FIRE 500 SHOTS A MINUTE. THEY'VE MADE PROMISES,
COMPROMISES, AND ENOUGH SPEECHES TO RAISE THE MILLIONS NEEDED TO MAKE MORE PROMISES AND
COMPROMISES. BUT HAVE ANY OF THESE MEN SAID ANYTHING LIKE: "YOU KNOW, THIS SPEECH IS GETTING A BIT
DULL, HOW ABOUT WE CALL IT QUITS AND ORGANIZE A BALL GAME OVER ON THAT FIELD?" HAVE ANY CANDIDATES
DEBATED SUCH ISSUES AS: "WHO HAD A BETTER SLIDER - LEFTY GROVE OR GREG MADDUX?" OR HOW ABOUT
AMONG ALL THE PUBLIC-WORK PROJECTS THEY'VE VOWED TO BACK, HAS ANY CANDIDATE MENTIONED A SHRINE IN
CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE TO STUDY IF BABE RUTH REALLY PREDICTED A HOME RUN IN CHICAGO BY POINTING TOWARD
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. AND HAVE THE IMMENSE RESPONSIBILITY OF THROWING OUT THE OPENING-
WHEN VOTING, KEEP ALL THIS IN MIND. AFTER ALL, IT'S BASEBALL. AND YOU'RE AN AMERICAN.
AMERICANS A GAME EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT AND A DOUBLEHEADER EVERY WEDNESDAY.
ESPN

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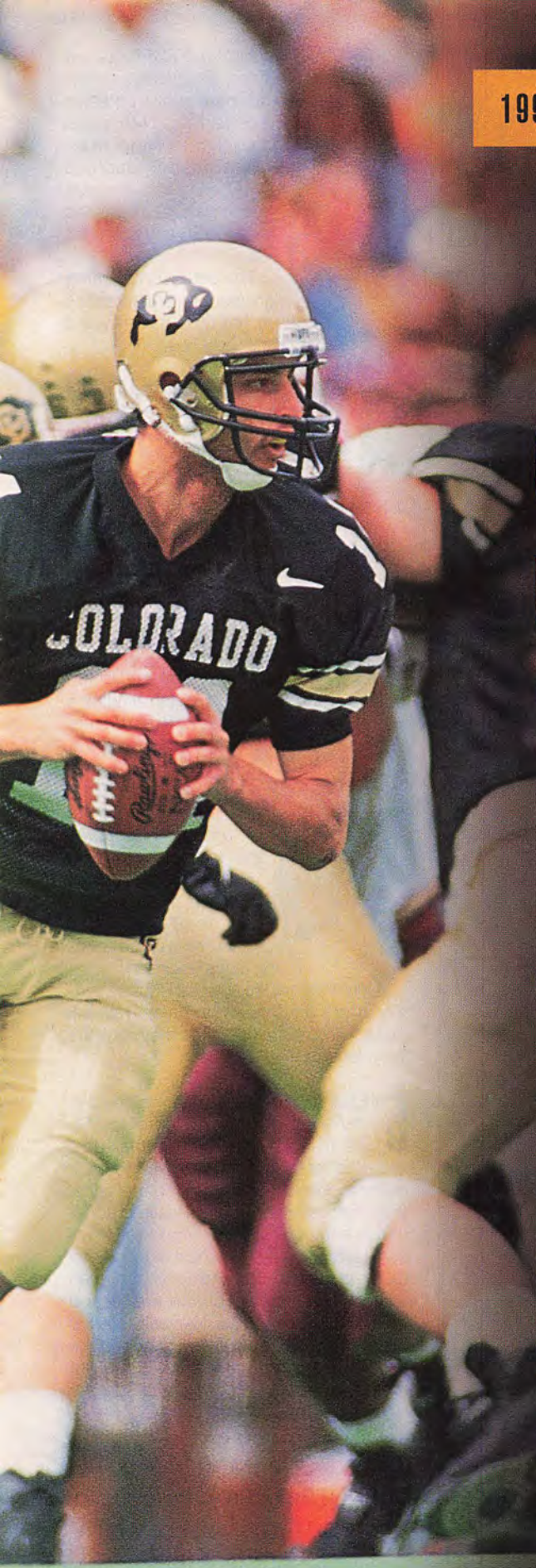

Buffalo Soldiers

RICK NEUHEISEL'S TROOPS HAVE THE FIREPOWER TO OUTGUN NEBRASKA—AND THE REST/Craig Ellenport

1 COLORADO The challenge of winning a national championship is staring Rick Neuheisel right in the face. He knew the opportunity to become the No. 1 team in college football was within reach when he replaced Bill McCartney as head coach before the 1995 season. And he knew his Buffaloes were even closer when he turned down overtures from his alma mater, UCLA, after the '95 season.

Colorado is loaded with talent on offense and defense. The quarterback is a legitimate Heisman Trophy candidate. The receiving corps is faster than light. And the team's attitude, well, that may be what puts the Buffs over the top.

"We don't have fear about being No. 1 or telling people that's our goal," says the 35-year-old Neuheisel, the third-youngest head coach in Division I-A. "It just so happens we play in the same conference with the team that's claimed that title the last two years. So it's easy to find out who you have to beat."

Colorado is 21-3 over the last two seasons, with two of the three losses coming at the hands of two-time defending national champion Nebraska.

Not that the Cornhuskers are the only tough team on the schedule this year. Colorado hosts Michigan on Sept. 14 and, thanks to the newly formed Big 12 Conference, must also face Texas, Texas A&M, Kansas and Kansas State before meeting Nebraska in Lincoln in the regular-season finale. Win that game and the Buffs likely will face a rematch with Texas in the inaugural Big 12 championship game. Win that game, and they probably play for the national championship in the Sugar Bowl, this year's 1-vs.-2 game in the bowl alliance.

Can they do it? You bet. If Koy Detmer stays healthy, he'll put up astronomical passing numbers in Colorado's high-octane offense. The defense, led by end Greg Jones and linebacker Matt Russell, held Oregon to six points in last year's Cotton Bowl.

"We have a lot of depth in a lot of areas," says Detmer, who was

MICHAEL C. HEBERT/SPURLOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

leading the nation in passing efficiency last year when a knee injury ended his season before the halfway point. "We feel like if we can pull ourselves together and play our best each and every week, then we've got a shot at it."

2 FLORIDA So you think a little humiliation in the Fiesta Bowl is going to slow Steve Spurrier? Not a chance. The former Heisman Trophy winner is obsessively determined to win a national championship, and his Gators are loaded. Quarterback Danny Wuerffel, who returns after setting the NCAA pass efficiency record last season, has a chance to be Florida's next Heisman winner.

The biggest question is a defense that could be better than ever. The Gators always have had great athletes on that side of the ball, and now, thanks to new defensive coordinator Bob Stoops, they've got an attacking scheme that puts the ball in Wuerffel's hands more often. Stoops, it should be noted, comes to Gainesville from Kansas State, where he molded one of the nation's best defenses.

Of course, the big game is Sept. 21, when Florida must play Tennessee in Knoxville. The Vols will be Gator bait.

3 FLORIDA STATE And if Florida is undefeated going into the Nov. 30 regular-season finale against Florida State, won't that be one for the ages. It's been 10 years since the Seminoles have lost more than two games in a season, and that streak won't end in 1996. Tailback Warrick Dunn is that rarest of college superstars—he opted to stay for his senior year—and now he's in the thick of the Heisman hunt. Thad Busby has been patiently waiting in the wings at quarterback. "He'll do better than Danny Kanell," says ESPN analyst Mike Gottfried. Busby has an arsenal at his disposal, even if potential all-world receiver Randy Moss was kicked off the team in May for marijuana use. Andre Cooper and E.G. Green combined last year to catch 131 passes for 2,009 yards and 25 TDs.

The defense, returning eight starters, will be fast as usual, led by Butkus Award candidate Daryl Bush.

JON SOOHOO

4 USC Did we jump the gun last year when we picked the Trojans to win it all? Obviously, but most of the talent we saw last season is back in '96. Head coach John Robinson might have a coniption if he doesn't beat Notre Dame this year—USC is 0-12-1 in its last 13 against the Fighting Irish. The Trojans get Notre Dame at home this year in the season finale (Nov. 30), and with the likes of Brad Otton at quarterback and Delon Washington at running back, the offense should be strong. Keep an eye on sophomore Billy Miller, heir to the big-play receiver spot vacated by top NFL draft pick Keyshawn Johnson. "He's going to be one of the bright sophomores in the country," says Robinson.

Defensive tackles Darrell Russell, a junior, and Matt Keneley, a senior, both will vie for All-America honors as they pace the Troy defense.

5 NEBRASKA Did someone say dynasty? You've got to go back to Nov. 14, 1992, to find the last time Nebraska lost a regular-season game. With back-to-back national championships under their belts, the Cornhuskers are riding a wave of dominance and confidence unmatched in recent history even by the best of the Miami teams of the late '80s and early '90s. Even without quarterback Tommie Frazier and I-back Lawrence Phillips, Nebraska has the talent to run the table again, but consider this: The team that last beat the Huskers in the regular season was lowly Iowa State, so anything can happen.

Heisman candidates Danny Wuerffel (left) and Warrick Dunn are the brightest lights in the talent-rich Sunshine State.

TOM DIPACE

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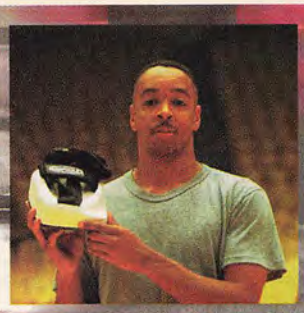

"I'm not 6'8" but that's OK. I've got my Jumpsoles."

"Spud" Webb (Anthony)

5 feet 7 inches tall
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10'

44"

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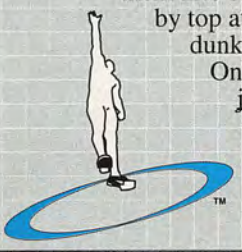

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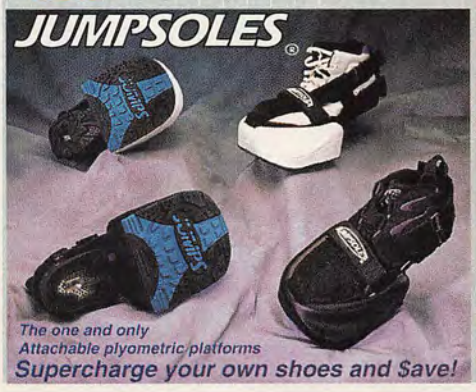

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This team is great, no question. The coaching staff is high on Stanford transfer Scott Frost at quarterback, and I-back Ahman Green rushed for 1,154 yards and 14 TDs as a freshman last season. Seven starters return from the defense that made mincemeat of Florida's vaunted passing attack in the Fiesta Bowl.

But take this to the bank: Nebraska will miss Frazier more than anybody knows.

6 NOTRE DAME The Fighting Irish went 9-3 last season with one of their thinnest teams in recent memory. They also had to deal with Lou Holtz's neck injury that kept him off the field for a few weeks and quarterback Ron Powlus' broken arm that sidelined him for the Orange Bowl loss to Florida State. By Notre Dame's standards, the luck of the Irish has suffered a few bad breaks. If the ball bounces their way this season, the Irish could be looking at a national championship. Powlus, if he avoids yet another injury, figures to put up big numbers in an offense that may actually feature a little one-back and more multiple passing looks than Holtz ever has had before. As for the young defense, consider this: Bob Davie is back for his third season, which makes him the longest-tenured defensive coordinator in Holtz's 11 years in South Bend.

7 TENNESSEE Yes, Peyton Manning is a big-time quarterback and a future No. 1 NFL draft pick. Yes, the trio of Manning, tailback Jay Graham and receiver Joey Kent rival last year's awesome Ohio State troika of Bobby Hoying, Eddie George and Terry Glenn. And yes, the Volunteers defense that held Ohio State to 14 points in the Citrus Bowl could be even better.

But no, Tennessee will not win the national championship, as several preseason publications have predicted. The Vols, who finished 11-1 last year and have a fairly cushy schedule this season, are pointing to the Florida game as their gateway to the title. However, this team has proven to be undisciplined off the field in recent years. Potential distractions easily could cause Tennessee to stumble against the likes of UCLA, Alabama, Georgia or Arkansas.

8 SYRACUSE Have Donovan McNabb, will travel. "It all starts with the quarterback, and he's a fantastic player," says Virginia Tech head coach Frank Beamer about McNabb, who came out of nowhere last season to set an NCAA record for passing efficiency by a freshman and finish third in the nation behind Wuerffel and Hoying.

But Syracuse has so much more than McNabb, and most of the talent is young. Paul Pasqualoni is 3-0 in bowl games, including a 41-0 rout of Clemson in last season's Gator Bowl. With rising stars such as fullback Rob Konrad, linebacker Antwaune Ponds and All-America cornerback Kevin Abrams, the Orangemen have enough firepower to get past the season opener against North Carolina (at home) and could be 10-0 when they host Miami in the regular-season finale.

SPORT'S PRESEASON ALL-AMERICA TEAM

OFFENSE		DEFENSE	
QB	Peyton Manning, Jr., Tennessee	DL	Cornell Brown, Sr., Virginia Tech
RB	Warrick Dunn, Sr., Florida St.	DL	Mike Vrabel, Sr., Ohio St.
RB	Troy Davis, Jr., Iowa St.	DL	Brandon Mitchell, Sr., Texas A&M
WR	Marcus Harris, Sr., Wyoming	DL	Jared Tomich, Sr., Nebraska
WR	Andre Cooper, Sr., Florida St.	LB	Jarrett Irons, Sr., Michigan
TE	Pat Fitzgerald, Sr., Texas	LB	Pat Fitzgerald, Sr., Northwestern
OT	Orlando Pace, Jr., Ohio St.	LB	Matt Russell, Sr., Colorado
G	Dan Neil, Sr., Texas	CB	Chris Canty, Jr., Kansas St.
C	Rod Payne, Sr., Michigan	CB	Kevin Abrams, Sr., Syracuse
G	Chris Naole, Sr., Colorado	S	Lawrence Wright, Sr., Florida
OT	Juan Roque, Sr., Arizona St.	S	Kevin Jackson, Sr., Alabama
PK	Michael Reeder, Jr., TCU	P	Will Brice, Sr., Virginia

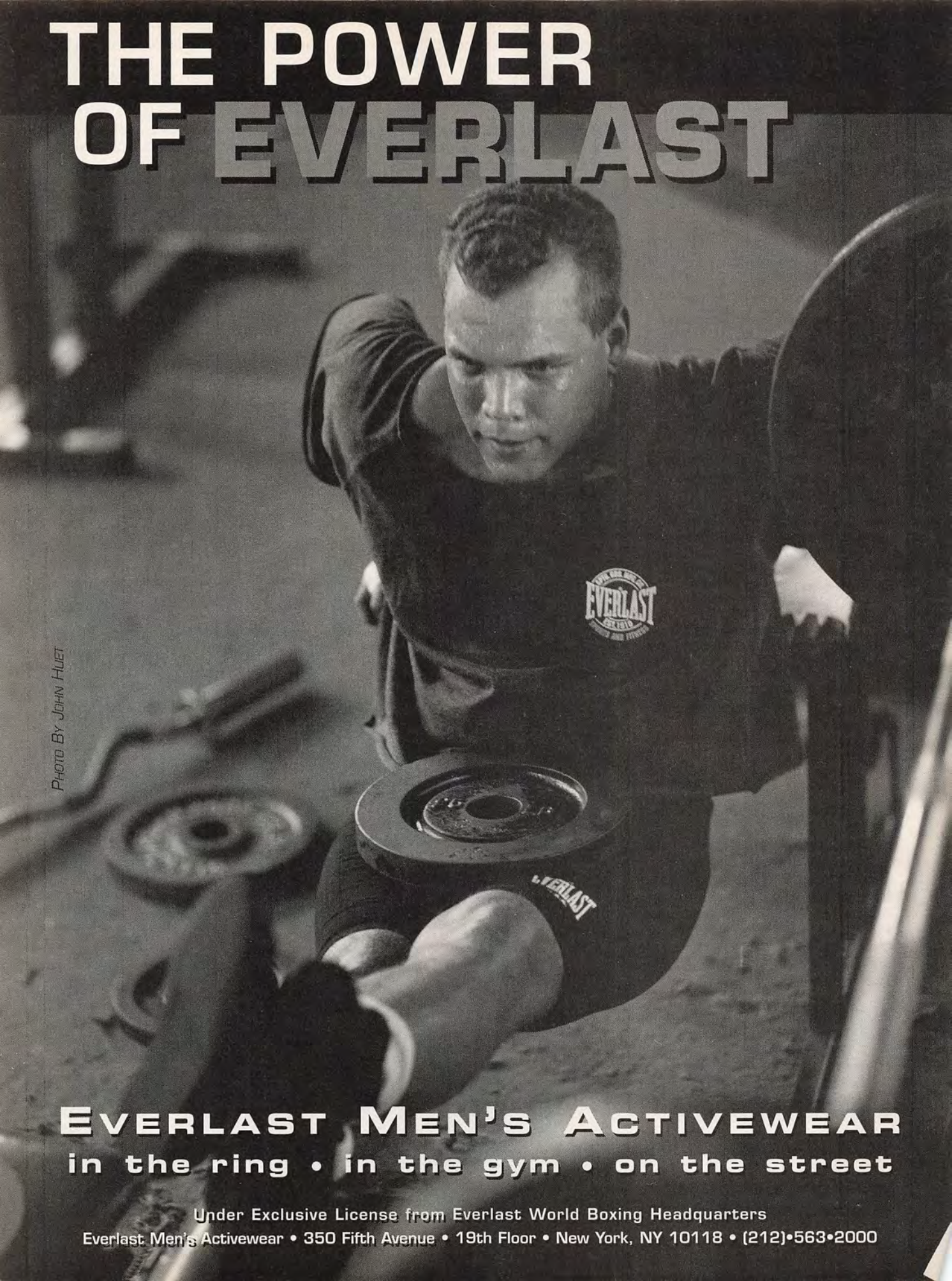
9 PENN STATE The Big Ten is up for grabs this season, not for lack of talent but rather because it is the deepest conference in college football. When in doubt, go with the winningest active coach in the game, Joe Paterno. Entering his 31st season, Paterno will go to war with a team that may feature his best defense in years but an offense that doesn't have much experience outside of senior quarterback Wally Richardson.

Nevertheless, keep an eye on receiver Joe Jurevicius, the heir apparent to All-American Bobby Engram. Jurevicius, an imposing 6-5, 223-pounder, caught 10 passes for 237 yards and two TDs in Penn State's spring game.

10 AUBURN A year ago, when Patrick Nix was still the incumbent starting quarterback for the Tigers, quarterbacks coach Jimbo Fisher boldly declared that backup Dameyune Craig would someday become the greatest quarterback in Auburn history. Craig, a junior who's finally getting his chance to start, is one reason why Auburn could surprise people and recapture the

MICHAEL C. HEBERT/SPURLOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

Peyton Manning, the nation's No. 1 QB, leads Tennessee.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TEN TO WATCH

Don't be surprised to see any of these teams sneak into the Top 25:

ARKANSAS: Trying to carry on from last year's surprising run.

BYU: Quarterback Steve Sarkisian will put up huge numbers.

CLEMSON: Tailback Raymond Priester and fullback Emory Smith (Emmitt's brother) form a dynamic duo.

GEORGIA: Former Marshall coach Jim Donnan moves up to the Division I-A ranks and has talent to play with.

GEORGIA TECH: Tailback C.J. Williams, a converted defensive back, is a superstar in the making.

KANSAS STATE: Wildcats have won at least nine games in each of the last three seasons.

LSU: Gerry DiNardo is building a team that will win the SEC title in the very near future.

OREGON: The Quack Attack will be strong on offense.

UTAH: Seventeen starters return for underrated head coach Ron McBride.

WISCONSIN: The Badgers are a Big Ten dark horse. Keep an eye on receiver Donald Hayes.

form that led to the Cinderella 11-0 season of 1993.

The other reason: Head coach Terry Bowden raided rival Alabama's staff to get defensive guru Bill Oliver, who will have a field day with a young and very talented Auburn defense. With nine starters returning, including linebackers Marcellus Mostella and Takeo Spikes, Oliver's new army will look a lot like the Crimson Tide swarming defenses of recent years.

11 MIAMI Like Syracuse, Miami has a chance to be 10-0 going into the season finale between those two squads. The Hurricanes' only real obstacle before that comes on Oct. 12 when they host arch rival Florida State, and it will be interesting to see if a Miami team that took its hits off the field last year and has a thin roster thanks to NCAA probation can put up a fight against the Seminoles. One thing's for sure: The Hurricanes have their backs against the wall, and that's when they are the most dangerous.

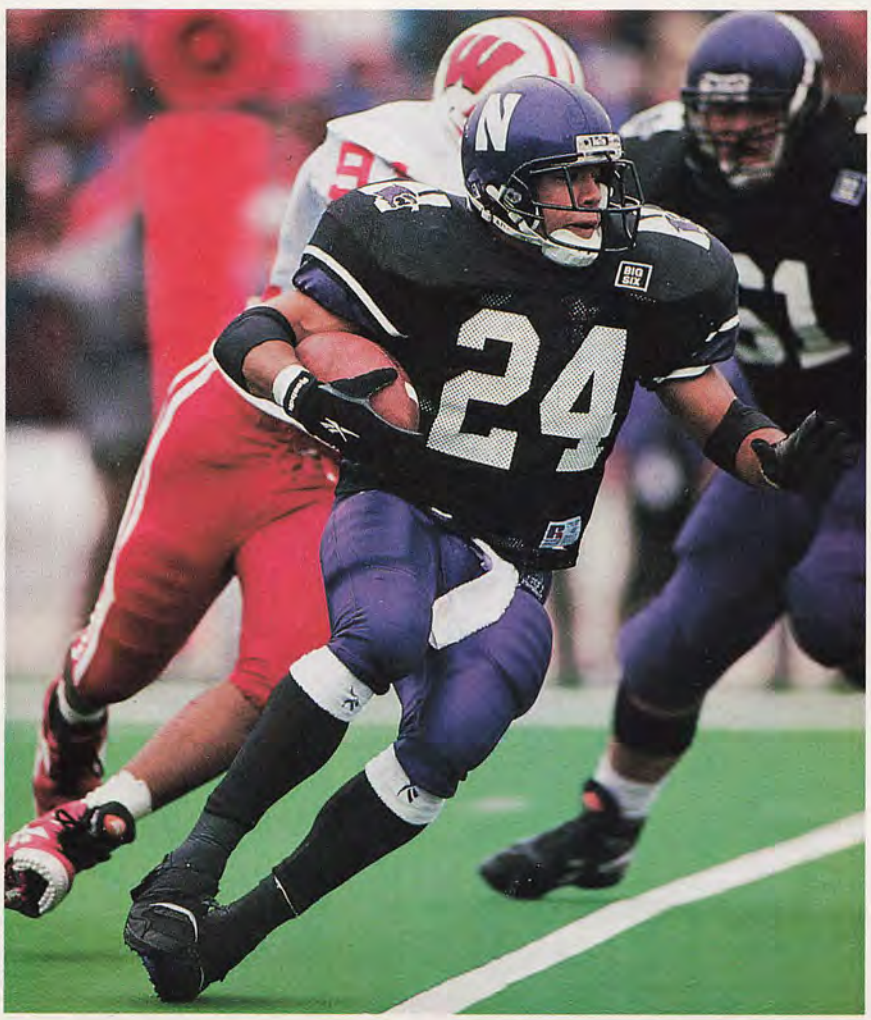
12 OHIO STATE How much longer can the Buckeyes continue to produce such awesome talent and not win a national championship? Contrary to popular belief, the well is not running dry in Columbus. Ohio State may have to replace three first-round draft picks and a record-setting quarterback, but last year's best Buckeye is back—Lombardi Award-winning left tackle Orlando Pace, who anchors an offensive line that may be even better than Nebraska's.

Bookend pass rushers Matt Finkes and Mike Vrabel lead a defense that will carry the load for Ohio State as the offense works in replacements for Hoying, George, Glenn and tight end Ricky Dudley. Count on underrated fullback Nicky Sualua to make several big plays during the course of the season.

13 TEXAS After winning the final title in the storied history of the Southwest Conference last year, the Longhorns might have been a lock to repeat in '96. In the Big 12, they look like a strong bet to reach the conference championship game—and then lose to either Colorado or Nebraska. Texas is not yet in a league with those two. But the offense, led by standout quarterback James Brown and a bevy of big-time running backs, should be enough to keep John Mackovic's squad in the thick of things.

14 NORTHWESTERN The unbelievable Wildcats may not get the breaks that helped them reach the Rose Bowl last season, but they may not need them. The team is better and the schedule is easier. Heisman Trophy candidate Darnell Autry, who already holds most of Northwestern's rushing records, returns, along with Butkus Award candidate Pat Fitzgerald (see sidebar).

15 VIRGINIA TECH Cornell Brown, the best Virginia Tech defensive end since Bruce Smith, may be the best defensive player in the nation. He's helped the Hokies earn a bowl bid and climb the ladder of respect in his first three seasons and opted to stay in school for his senior campaign because there is still a lack of respect for the Hokies. They finally made it to



ALLEN KEE/BRSP

Darnell Autry spearheads an even better Northwestern team.

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NORTHWESTERN WANTS MORE

Like the humble orphans in "Oliver," the student-athletes on Northwestern's football team approach the overlords of college football meekly. "May we have some more?" they ask, looking for another hearty helping of the stardom they enjoyed last season, when the Wildcats redefined the term "Cinderella season" and captured their first Big Ten title since 1936.

The Wildcats, however, aren't as meek as they look, and they'd love to fool the competition again. But Northwestern—after finishing 10-2 last year, the team's first winning season since 1971—won't be sneaking up on anyone in 1996.

"But at the same time we're older, more mature," says Pat Fitzgerald, Northwestern's All-America linebacker who suffered a broken leg in the 10th game of the season and missed the Rose Bowl loss to USC. "We've got a solid nucleus of players coming back. I think we're going to be OK."

The team's confidence comes from its energy source, head coach Gary Barnett. The 50-year-old Barnett instilled the motto "Expect Victory" when he first arrived at Northwestern, and he's brainwashed just about everybody into doing just that.

"He's just a great man and a great coach," says Fitzgerald, whose leadership on the field is a big reason why Northwestern shouldn't suffer a hangover in '96.

As for Barnett, he's just trying to make sure he has enough time to coach this team now that he's a big shot who must field requests for appearances from just about every organization imaginable.

"Your private life just about disappears," says Barnett, whose biggest thrill this off-season came when he threw out the first pitch to open the Cubs' season at Wrigley Field. "You really have to work hard to keep a private life. But all of it is for the better. All of it puts our program in a better light and creates focus on our program."

Recruiting is making strides. The Wildcats are still far from garnering a top-10-caliber class, but this year's group is rated higher than the players who got Northwestern to the Rose Bowl last season.

Where the success of '95 really helps is in the wallet, and not just in the form of Barnett's new long-term contract. Northwestern alumni have discovered the joy of a winning football team for the first time in eons, and their donations will go a long way toward the multimillion-dollar renovations that are currently under way to bring Northwestern's athletic facilities on a par with those of other Big Ten schools.

Now it's up to Barnett and the Wildcats to keep the momentum going. The excitement is building in Evanston to see what Northwestern can do for an encore. Says Barnett: "That's the way it should be." —*CE*

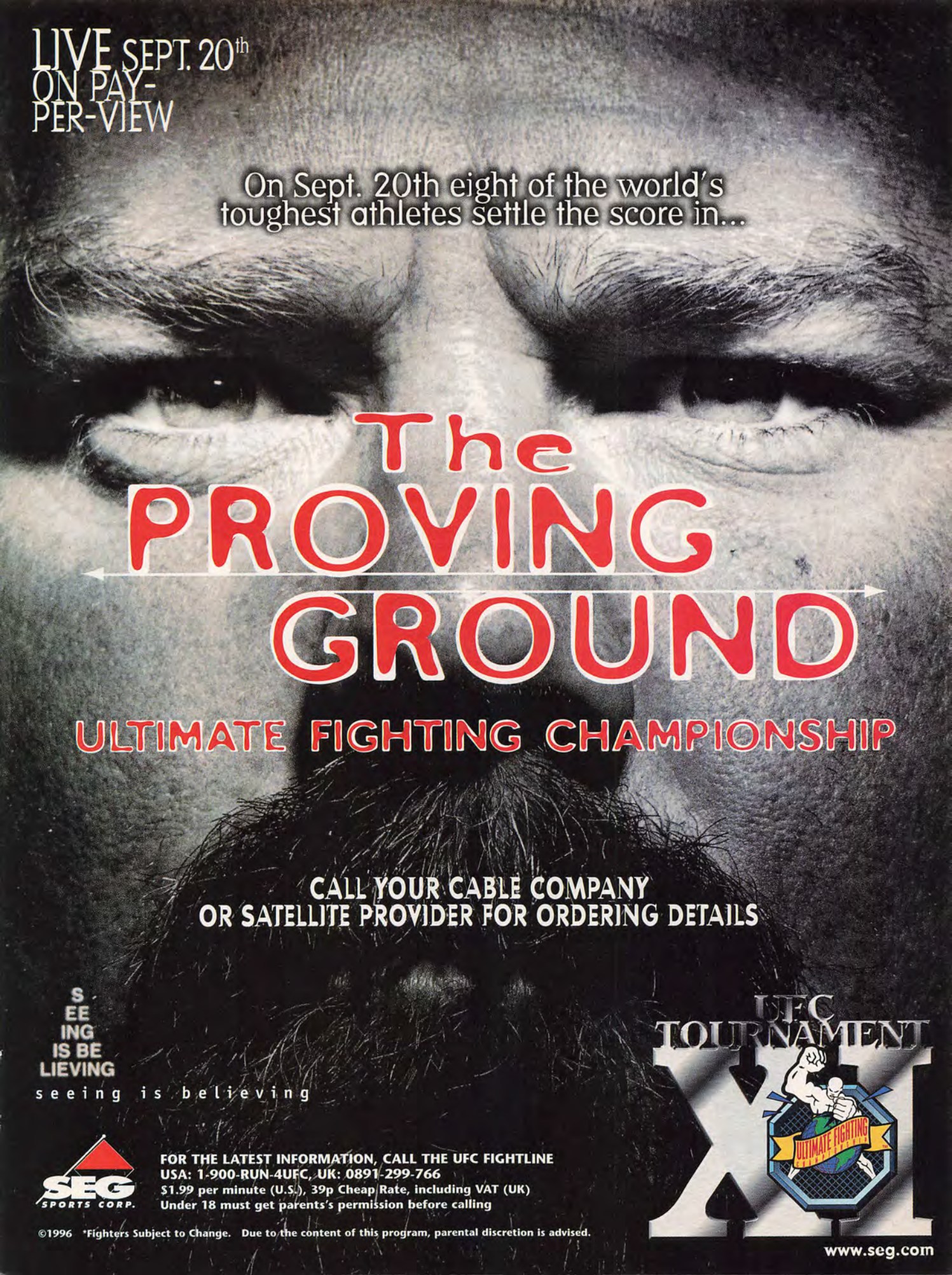
RUDY WINSTON FOR SCHWARTZMAN SPORTS

Running back Byron Hanspard paces explosive Texas Tech.

a major bowl, beating Texas in the Sugar, and here we are picking them to finish third in the Big East behind Syracuse and Miami. "I understand," says Brown, a consensus All-American. "We have to battle all over again for that respect." The Hokies take a 10-game winning streak into the '96 season. They've lost some key players, but don't count Brown and head coach Frank Beamer out just yet.

16 TEXAS TECH The Red Raiders' offense averaged 33 points a game at home last season, then exploded for 55 against Air Force in the Copper Bowl. With quarterback Zebbie Lethridge and running back Byron Hanspard back in the fold, expect more of the same. Hanspard is the real deal. If Tech can get past Kansas State on the road in the season opener, Spike Dykes' squad has an outside shot at winning the Big 12's south division.

17 ALABAMA The Crimson Tide has lost recruits to NCAA probation, defensive coordinator Bill Oliver to rival Auburn and offensive coordinator Homer Smith to a bitter feud with head coach Gene Stallings. But Alabama still has plenty of talent and a schedule that provides at least seven wins. Defensive backs Kevin Jackson and Deshea Townsend lead a star-studded defense. But Freddie Kitchens has yet to establish himself at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quarterback, and until he does the Tide can only go so far.

18 IOWA Big Ten coaches have spent the entire off-season touting Iowa as a serious Rose Bowl contender, and for good reason. Seven starters return on both sides of the line, and the Hawkeyes are coming off a blowout win over Washington in the Sun Bowl. Ohio State, Northwestern and Wisconsin all must travel to Iowa City, and the nonconference schedule is favorable. Senior Sedrick Shaw, who rushed for 1,477 yards last season, already is Iowa's career leader in rushing yards and TDs.

19 VIRGINIA The '96 Cavaliers will be a notch below the squad that stunned Florida State last year to share the ACC crown with the Seminoles, but George Welsh should have enough firepower to hold off Clemson, Georgia Tech and North Carolina for the No. 2 spot in the conference. Quarterback is a question, but running back definitely is not: Tiki Barber is a bona fide Heisman candidate. His twin brother, cornerback Ronde Barber, can play as well.

20 MICHIGAN Defense is the name of the game for the Wolverines. Nine starters return on that side, and the cornerback tandem of Clarence Thompson and Charles Woodson is perhaps the best in the nation. Scott Dreisbach is back at quarterback, and his progress is vital because the offense features more question marks than a Michigan team is used to having.

21 ARIZONA STATE Every time Arizona State looks as if it's ready to make a run at the Top 25, something goes wrong. So it's with a degree of caution that we give Bruce Snyder's club the benefit of the doubt. Sun Devils advocates would point to last year's 6-5 finish and the presence of some big-time talent on offense. All-Pac-10 quarterback Jake Plummer returns, bolstered by a solid receiving corps led by Keith Poole. The offensive line features five returning starters, led by 6-8, 325-pound All-America left tackle Juan Roque. If the defense, which returns 10 starters, can show any kind of improvement, Arizona State will win seven games.

22 EAST CAROLINA Look carefully at Florida State's "fast break" offense and you'll see some of the schemes that East Carolina's Steve Logan developed long before Charlie Ward played his way to the Heisman. Logan is an offensive mastermind, and he's a pretty good head coach as well, having quietly led the Pirates to consecutive eight-win seasons. Logan's got some good talent on both sides of the ball, and he's got a quarterback, senior Marcus Crandell, who ranks as a lethal weapon. "I wouldn't trade him for any quarterback in the country," says Logan.

23 WASHINGTON Never heard of Rashaan Shehee? You will. As a sophomore last season, the 5-11, 200-pound tailback made the first start of his career against Notre Dame and rushed for 171 yards. He averaged 135 yards and two TDs in his seven starts. Shehee and a strong offensive line led by super sophomore guard Benji Olson are the keys to a Huskies team that must replace quarterback Damon Huard, All-America safety Lawyer Milloy and eight other starters. The schedule is no help. Washington opens on the road against up-and-coming Arizona State, then faces a monthlong stretch in midseason that features road games against Notre Dame, Oregon and USC.

BOB ROSATO

ALLEN KEE/BRSP

24 TEXAS A&M The Aggies are 59-11-2 in the '90s, the fourth-best record in the nation over that period. But unlike the three teams ahead of them (Florida State, Nebraska, Miami), A&M has not won a national title in that time. Some thought the Aggies would do it last year, and they didn't really come close. There is still plenty of talent, but the advent of the Big 12 will end Texas A&M's dominance.

25 WYOMING Pencil in the Western Athletic Conference champ here. It might be Wyoming, but it could also be BYU, Utah or maybe Colorado State. Wyoming, with 18 returning starters, could clinch a spot in the inaugural WAC title game early if it gets past Air Force on Sept. 21. Receiver Marcus Harris is the player to watch: He's on pace to break NCAA career records for receiving yards and average per catch. ★

Washington's Rashaan Shehee (above) is primed to make a name for himself; Virginia's Tiki Barber also can cut it.

The Only Way Left for the "Average Athlete" To Get Above the Rim

Here is the Uncensored Message My Three-on-Three Teammate Asked Me Not to Write.

My three-on-three teammate is a great guy. And I understand why he wants me to keep my mouth shut. He just wants to keep "vertical secrets" - secrets. But I can't keep quiet anymore. I'm angry because most basketball players are really getting jerked around. And I'm tired of it.

The pros want you to think they were born in the air, but then train secretly in sophisticated, hi-tech gyms in the off season. Most high school and college coaches are nice enough guys and certainly want to see their athletes maximize their potential, but don't have the time and resources to monitor the changing world of applied physiology.

So most athletes are left with a confused misunderstanding of training techniques, including (outdated, bodyweight, plyometrics) and wander endlessly trying every program and every gimmick advertised. The truth is, many programs will work for awhile. Then, they fail to deliver any more gains and all you get is sore joints and fatigue.

Here's the problem. Most guys don't have access to multimillion dollar training facilities with sophisticated equipment and personal trainers to monitor training results. Most guys also don't have access to potent drugs. (Hey maybe Olympic athletes aren't the only athletes who use steroids.) So what's an average athlete to do if he wants to increase his vertical. Recently, I stumbled onto a workable system. You can still get up there, I promise.

The method? It's easy. No gimmicky stuff. No endless jump rope sets and no jumping off chairs and tables. No special shoes to buy. Just good science applied to increasing your vertical. So, three-on-three partner or not, I'm going to reveal everything. Nothing held back. By the way you'll blow you coaches mind when you start talking about this system. My advice is to "just do it" and let your coach and friends ask you what's going on after they see the results.

One thing though. Don't expect some crummy training course designed for the masses. Yes, this stuff is for average guys, but it's for average guys who love intensity. Actually, what you'll get is a complete program that is very different from the conventional training you probably have been taught before.

Here's just a sample of what you'll learn:

- Why there's no such thing as a hard gainer. Learn the facts about genetics and how small a role they play in vertical leaping ability.
- Learn how often to train. This may be the most important element to increasing your vertical.
- Why "full range of motion" plyometrics can actually slow down your progress.
- A ridiculously simple "weighted" exercise that must be performed if you want to maximize your vertical.

Let me tell you something. My three-on-three teammate wants me to see a shrink. He thinks I'm psycho for revealing all these inside secrets. You see, he's only five-eight. But he doesn't play like it. He dunks over guys a foot taller than him. Nothing in the world (I really mean this) makes him any happier than swatting some big guy's shot into the stands. The truth is, every time he blocks a shot or tomahawks one down, he stares down the guy guarding him. It's a little ridiculous and embarrassing at times. It even makes me feel intimidated and I'm on his team.

He gets off when people think has has natural jumping ability. It's an ego thing. He loves to let them think he too was "born in the air." But he wasn't. He just follows the secrets I'll reveal - and his vertical grows like mad. I suspect he loves the attention and he doesn't want anyone else to steal his show. That's why he wants me to keep my mouth shut.

Listen, I tried every idea imaginable to increase my vertical when I was younger, mostly with disappointing results before I wised up. I really felt like I was ripped off because I didn't have this video tape training package earlier.

- The secrets have really worked for me.

Here's more . . . .

- What the Russian and Eastern-block athletes do to increase their vertical.
- And what exercises Russian trainers insist their players become proficient in.
- A quick "add-on" exercise that will really get you up in the air.
- What muscle soreness is really telling you.
- Why the "experts" in plyometric training are dead wrong in their training advice.
- How to get yourself into a mental "zone" for supergrowth in vertical leaping ability.

Will these secrets work for you? Who knows? But I'll bet it's worth the investment. Maybe my three-on-three teammate is right. Maybe the guys who get this videotape, training log, and audio tapes won't follow its advice. Too bad for them. But for the really smart guys who do follow its advice, LOOKOUT. Get ready to take your game to a whole new level.

You'll also learn about ten foods you can buy at any grocery store (that if you eat while using this program) can induce a biochemical response, almost forcing your body to jump higher. You'll even get access to a fax hotline that allows you to get personalized training advice. One more thing. We've prepared a fascinating report that explains how some athletes may actually be able to grow taller by eating certain foods at certain times.

To get more information on these breakthrough training techniques, fill out the survey below and get it back to us as soon as humanly possible. For fastest service fax the survey form to 815-947-3031. We'll rush you this FREE REPORT: "Why Almost Everyone is Wrong About How They Train to Increase Their Vertical" and tell you how to get your hands on this breakthrough new video program.

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Results _____

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GROUND HOGS

Although some big-name collegiate running backs turned pro, the top four rushers from last year return. The names of our "Top 10, Plus 10" might not be huge, but their numbers will be. In alphabetical order:

TOP 10

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Darnell Autry, Northwestern
(5-11, 209, junior)
Autry averaged 30 carries a game in establishing a school-record and Big Ten-leading rushing total of 1,675 yards. The second-team All-American and Heisman Trophy finalist figures to pile up the yardage in preconference matchups with Wake Forest, Duke and Ohio University and continue his streak of consecutive 100-yard rushing games, which currently is at 13.
High game: 32 carries, 226 yards vs. Purdue

Tiki Barber, Virginia
(5-10, 195, senior)
Barber, who was valedictorian of his high school class and is an honors student at Virginia, posted eight 100-yard rushing games en route to a school-record 1,397 yards last year. His 193-yard outburst against Florida State is the biggest rushing total allowed by the Seminoles this decade.
High game: 31 carries, 193 yards, one touchdown vs. Florida State

Troy Davis, Iowa State
(5-8, 185, junior)
The first sophomore and fifth player ever in NCAA I-A history to reach 2,000 yards (he finished with 2,010), Davis somehow slipped to fifth in the Heisman voting. He had four games of 200 yards or more and averaged 157 yards against Iowa State's four top-10-ranked opponents. His remarkable 302-yard game against UNLV last year came in less than three quarters of play. He's explosively quick, strong and bounces off hits.
High game: 36 carries, 302 yards, five touchdowns vs. UNLV

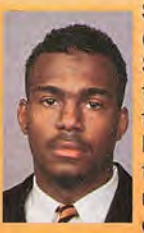
Warrick Dunn, Florida State
(5-9, 185, senior)
The first two-time 1,000-yard rusher in Florida State history, Dunn set the single-season school mark last year with 1,242 by averaging 7.5 yards per carry, second-best in the nation. Dunn, who stayed in school partly to keep a graduation promise to his deceased mother, is the best that running-backs coach Billy Sexton has tutored in 13 years, and that includes Dexter Carter, Edgar Bennett and William Floyd.
High game: 20 carries, 184 yards, one touchdown vs. Miami

Jay Graham, Tennessee
(6-0, 206, senior)
Affixing himself as the starting tailback in '95 after serving as backup to current NFLers James Stewart and Aaron Hayden the year before, Graham quietly set a Volunteers record with 1,438 yards rushing. A straight-ahead power back, Graham ran for 154 yards against Ohio State in the Florida Citrus Bowl.
High game: 39 carries, 239 yards, one touchdown vs. Vanderbilt

Ahman Green, Nebraska
(6-0, 210, sophomore)
An 18-year-old freshman last year when he stepped into the starting I-back role in place of the troubled Lawrence Phillips, Green rushed his way to a nation-leading 7.7 yards per carry and honorable mention All-America honors. Green possesses tremendous lateral movement and has been timed at 4.34 in the 40, the second-best mark ever recorded by a Husker.
High game: 12 carries, 176 yards, three touchdowns vs. Iowa State

Byron Hanspard, Texas Tech
(6-0, 190, junior)
Hanspard not only led the Red Raiders with 1,374 rushing yards, but also had high marks in receptions (35), yards receiving (474) and touchdown catches (seven). Hanspard, who has the speed to beat defenders to the corner but can also dish out punishing hits, rushed for 668 yards and scored 11 TDs in his last three games.
High game: 24 carries, 260 yards, four touchdowns vs. Air Force in the Copper Bowl

George Jones, San Diego State
(5-9, 210, senior)
A second-team All-American, Jones rushed for 1,842 yards and 23 touchdowns in breaking former Aztec Marshall Faulk's school and conference (WAC) records. He rushed for 200 or more yards in three games and averaged six yards per carry. Jones, who played 3½ games with a broken jaw, can bench press 455 pounds.
High game: 28 carries, 270 yards, five touchdowns vs. Fresno State



Sedrick Shaw, Iowa
(6-1, 195, senior)
Shaw already has had the best career ever for an Iowa running back. Consider: He is the career leader in rushing yards (3,040), carries (613) and touchdowns (24, tied) and also holds single-season marks in each category (1995: 316 carries for 1,477 yards and 15 touchdowns). With 4.3 speed and good size, Shaw can either juke or run over people. He regularly does both.
High game: 42 carries, 250 yards, one touchdown vs. Michigan State

Wasean Tait, Toledo
(5-8, 175, senior)
Like Autry, Tait rushed for 100 or more yards in every game last season and ended up, after Toledo's Las Vegas Bowl win over Nevada, with more than 2,000 yards. A Doak Walker Award finalist, Tait averaged 173 yards per game, second in the nation behind Iowa State's Davis. Too small out of high school to get a substantial look from Michigan or Michigan State four years ago, Tait returns to again carve up the MAC.
High game: 41 carries, 226 yards, one touchdown vs. Bowling Green

PLUS 10

Robert Edwards, Georgia
(6-2, 208, junior)
Converted to running back during spring practice in 1995, Edwards was the nation's leading rusher and scorer for two games last season before breaking his foot.

Danyell Ferguson, Miami (FL)
(6-0, 202, senior)
Ferguson became only the second Miami player to rush for 1,000 yards in a season last year, netting 1,069 and scoring 12 touchdowns.

Madre Hill, Arkansas
(6-1, 193, junior)
Hill set a school rushing record last year (1,387 yards) before shredding his ACL in the SEC Championship against Florida. He may redshirt.

Raymond Priester, Clemson
(6-1, 230, junior)
Priester set three Clemson rushing records as a sophomore last year: yards in a single game (263), season (1,322) and per game (116).

Rashaan Shehee, Washington
(5-11, 200, junior)
Shehee's first start, against Notre Dame, netted him 171 yards and two scores. He started only the final seven games but finished with 957 total.

Charles Talley, Northern Illinois
(6-0, 229, senior)
The honorable mention All-American gained 1,540 yards on the season, including 146 and two touchdowns against Florida.

David Thompson, Oklahoma State
(5-8, 200, senior)
Outshined by Davis in the Big Eight, Thompson rushed for 1,509 yards and a 5.9 per carry average.

Billy West, Pittsburgh
(5-10, 195, junior)
West, who missed all but two games last year but is now healthy, replaced an injured Curtis Martin in '94 and rushed for 1,358 yards.

CJ Williams, Georgia Tech
(6-1, 211, junior)
A former key reserve with the basketball team and a converted cornerback/safety, Williams rushed for 1,138 yards last year.

Abu Wilson, Utah State
(6-1, 207, senior)
Wilson, who in January was granted a sixth year of eligibility, is the nation's No. 6 returning rusher after a campaign of 1,476 yards. *—Paul M. Johnson*

NHL PREVIEW

NEXT MONTH IN
SPORT

ANCIENT
CHINESE FORMULA RESTORES HAIR'S THICKNESS, COLOR, AND PROMOTES ITS GROWTH.

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The key ingredient is radix polygoni multiflori, the root of the wild eastern rose plant.

Scientists had intended to use this herb as a means of lowering high levels of cholesterol, yet they noted that one of the amazing unexpected results were that patients began to grow thicker, healthier hair, stopped its loss and reversed the graying process after a 3-4 month usage period.

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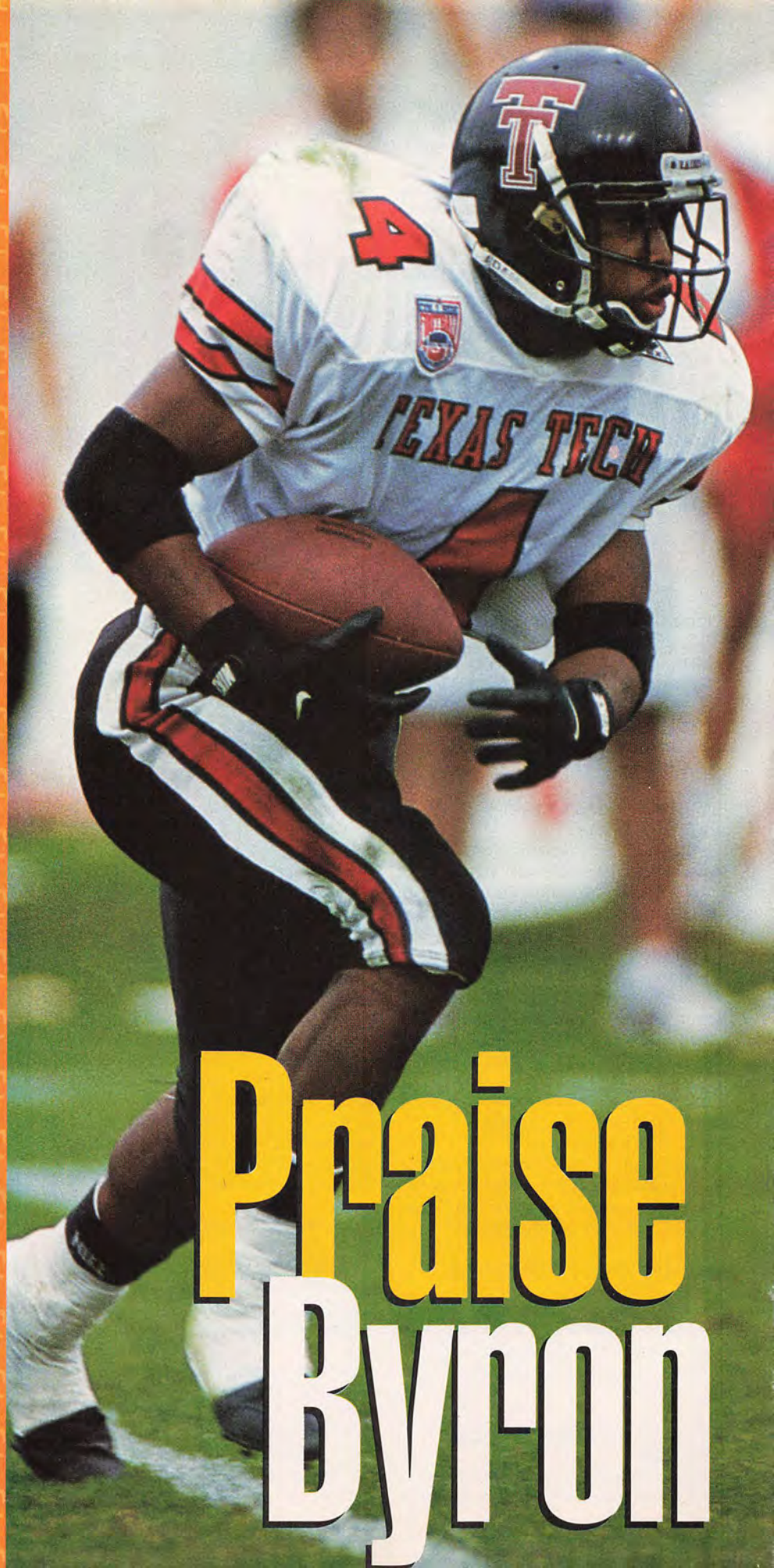
HOTSHOT

Byron Hanspard

Praise Byron



Texas Tech tailback Byron Hanspard is happy to be playing football and grateful that he's excelling at it. But not, perhaps, for the reasons you may think.

"Football gives me the platform to lift up the name of Jesus," says Hanspard, who rarely utters a sentence that doesn't mention God.

If Hanspard performs this year as he did last, he'll have more than a platform, he'll have a stage. The 6-0, 190-pounder from DeSoto, Texas, led the Southwest Conference in rushing (1,374 yards) and touchdowns (18) in its swan-song season and ranked fifth nationally in scoring, 14th in rushing and 10th in all-purpose yardage. He capped his year by pirating 260 yards and four touchdowns from Air Force in the Red Raiders' Copper Bowl win, ending an outstanding stretch of three games that added up to 668 rushing yards and 11 touchdowns.

Those numbers vaulted Hanspard into the 1996 Heisman derby, which he predictably approaches with God in mind.

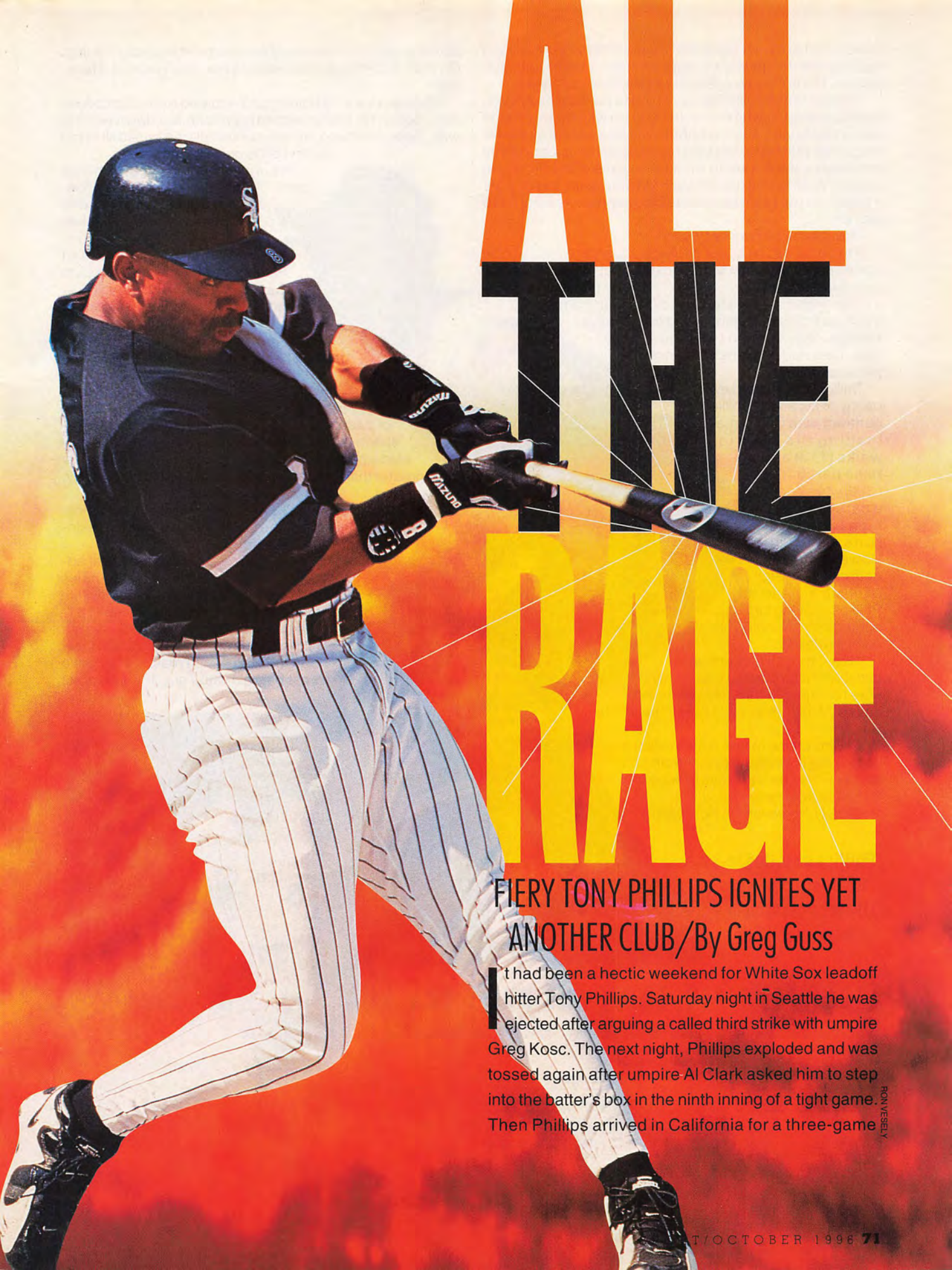
"It's just by the grace of the Lord that I've been chosen to be a part of the Heisman race," he says. "I'm grateful to the Lord for that opportunity."

That opportunity would have presented itself sooner had Hanspard chosen a school such as Nebraska, Notre Dame or Colorado—each of which sought him—after his 2,000-yard, 35-touchdown senior season at DeSoto High. But Texas Tech is where God wanted him to be, he says, and the football program sorely needs him. Hanspard's slashing, deceptively quick running and surprising pass-catching deftness—he led the team on the receiving end, too, with 35 catches, 474 yards and seven touchdowns—will be key to Tech as it ventures into the Big 12 to face a host of top-ranked conference opponents.

"So many people are doubting us or don't think we can play amongst the big teams," says Hanspard. "The Lord doesn't place you somewhere and then not take care of you there."

—Paul M. Johnson

BOB ROSATO



ALL THE RAGE

FIERY TONY PHILLIPS IGNITES YET ANOTHER CLUB/By Greg Guss

It had been a hectic weekend for White Sox leadoff hitter Tony Phillips. Saturday night in Seattle he was ejected after arguing a called third strike with umpire Greg Kosc. The next night, Phillips exploded and was tossed again after umpire Al Clark asked him to step into the batter's box in the ninth inning of a tight game. Then Phillips arrived in California for a three-game

RON VESELY

series with his former team, the Angels. Phillips was deluged by requests for interviews, appearances, autographs and photos. The irony was as thick as Frank Thomas' thighs.

The last time Phillips had anything to do with the Angels, he discovered that he had nothing to do with them. Phillips was a free agent, and his phone was dead silent all winter long. After putting up the best numbers of his career in 1995 and leading the Angels to within one game of the American League West crown, the 36-year-old free agent couldn't get a bite from the team he admits he desperately wanted to play for.

How much is a pennant worth?

That may be the question Angels management will be asking itself *this* winter after deciding that Phillips was "too expensive" to keep.

"We waited and waited and didn't hear from them, so finally my agent called them," says Phillips. "He was told I was too expensive. They had no plans to even offer me a contract."

Phillips had earned every penny of his $4.366 million contract with California, leading the team in walks (113) and on-base percentage (.396) while posting a career-high 27 homers and 119 runs scored. However, the Angels chose to sign pitching instead of Phillips, leaving him to contemplate finishing his career in Japan.

"Hey, man, I understand baseball's a business. I was on my way to Japan when the White Sox called," Phillips says. "I thank the White Sox."

Phillips chose to take a $2.5 million pay cut to play in Chicago rather than go to Japan, where he had offers in excess of $3 million from two clubs.

Clearly, however, Phillips wasn't satisfied with his situation when he arrived in spring training. On Feb. 23, Phillips engineered a one-man protest. He retired.

Phillips left spring training and returned to his Scottsdale, Ariz., home. He disconnected his phone, sat down with his wife, Debi, and two kids and contemplated baseball in the context of his and his family's life.

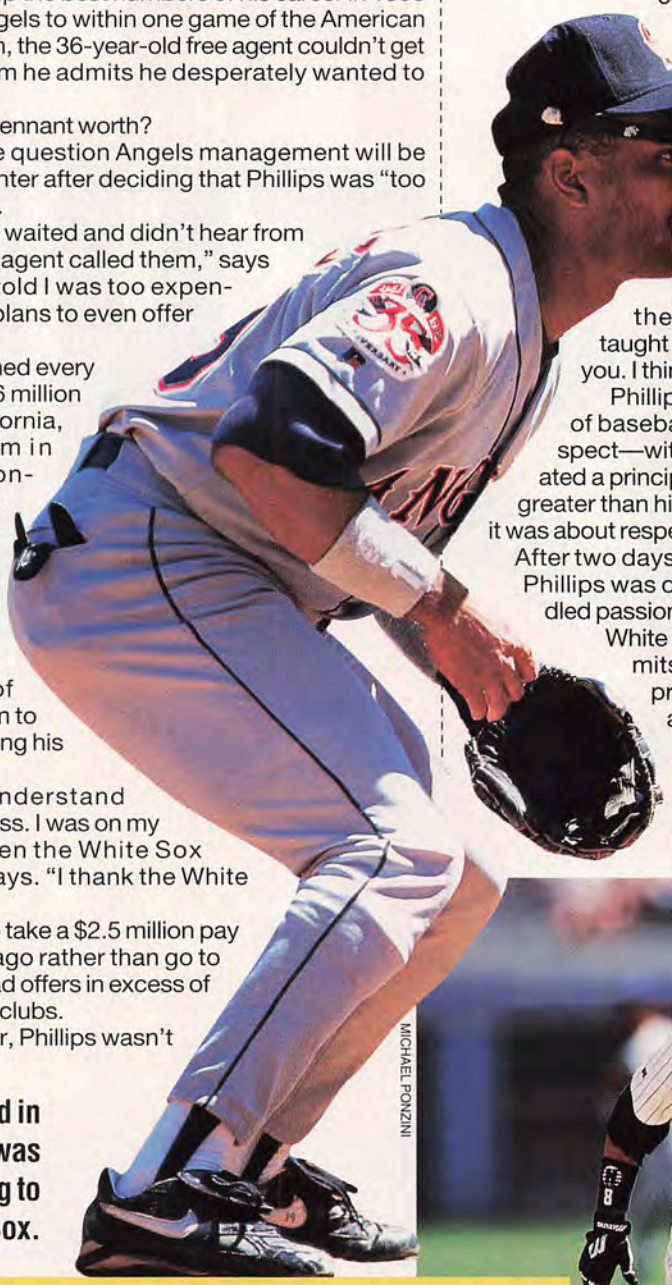
"In a way, I felt betrayed," Phillips says. "I had been brought up to believe that if you do your job and put up numbers, you'll be taken care of."

With mentors like Hall of Famer Joe Morgan, and veterans Carney Lansford, Dusty Baker and Davey Lopes, Phillips learned the reality of baseball both on and off the field. "Guys like that, man, they were tough," says Phillips. "They taught me how to fight, how nothing can get to you. I think that's what I can bring to a club now."

Phillips' matriculation in the old-school style of baseball—play hard, pay your dues, earn respect—with the Oakland A's of the early '80s created a principled man whose pride was wounded far greater than his pocketbook. "It wasn't about money, it was about respect," Phillips explains.

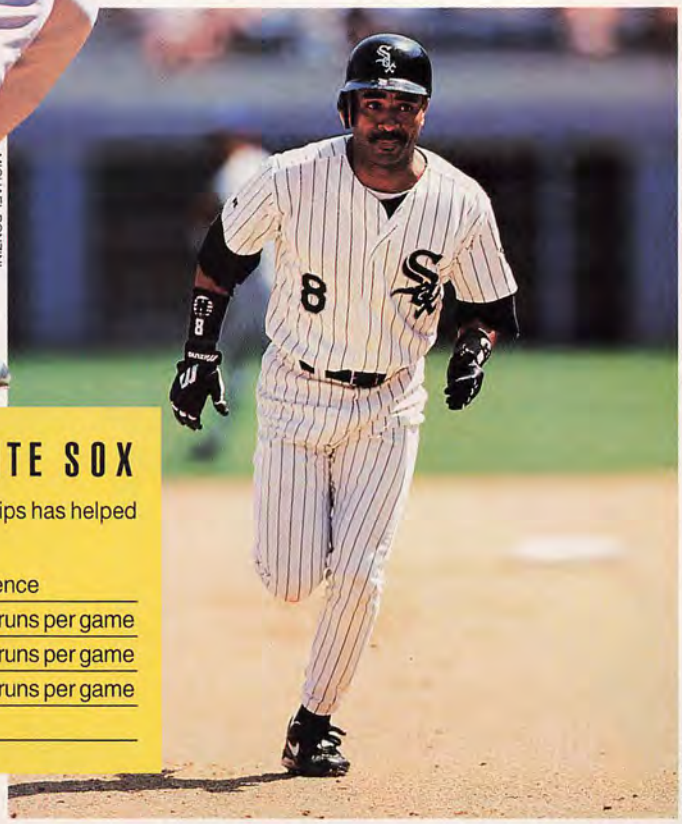
After two days of talks with family and close friends, Phillips was on a plane back to Florida with a rekindled passion for the game.

White Sox general manager Ron Schueler admits he got a steal in Phillips. "The Angels probably thought they'd have to pay him at least what he made last year," explains Schueler, who has known Phillips since his rookie season in Oakland in 1982. "And I realize that I got a great bargain with Tony. It's a contract



MICHAEL PONZINI

Phillips excelled in Anaheim, but was still sent packing to the grateful Sox.



RON VESELY

TONY THE TIGER, ANGEL AND WHITE SOX

Beginning with his trade from Oakland to Detroit in 1990, Phillips has helped each new team score more runs.

	Before Phillips	With Phillips	Difference
Tigers	3.81 (1989)	4.63 (1990)	+0.82 runs per game
Angels	4.72 (1994)	5.52 (1995)	+0.80 runs per game
White Sox	5.21 (1995)	5.72 (1996)*	+0.51 runs per game

*Through All-Star game

we negotiated in good faith, and he took it."

With Chicago's projected improvement of more than 24 games this year, Phillips is having too much fun winning to worry about his contract any longer. In the heat of a pennant race, Phillips says he couldn't be happier. Once again he's among the league leaders in walks, on-base percentage and runs. Once again a team's resurgence has coincided with his arrival.

Lopes, now the San Diego Padres' batting instructor, believes Phillips' competitiveness was the ingredient Chicago lacked last year. "No knock on Lance Johnson, but I think most managers would like to have [Phillips'] type of personality rather than somebody who's more of an introvert," says Lopes. "I think every team needs to have that type of personality on the ballclub, and that's what Chicago didn't have last year. They knew what they needed and I think they're pretty pleased with the acquisition."

Phillips' teammates also realize the importance of his presence. "I think he's the difference," says White Sox second baseman Ray Durham. "He's one of the best leadoff hitters in baseball. He's hitting for power and average, he's drawing walks, and he's playing exceptional defense, which he's not really known for."

And at age 37, Phillips has just entered the prime of his 18-year professional career. Phillips never registered more than 500 at-bats in the majors until his first season in Detroit when Tigers manager Sparky Anderson gave him the chance to play every day. From 1990 through 1995, Phillips ranked second in the majors in runs scored with 621 (Barry Bonds was first with 635) and fourth in walks with 632. "I think that's the deceiving part," says Schueler. "He's 37, but he didn't get a chance to play every day until a later age. Everyone wonders why he's getting stronger, and the fact of the matter is, he's getting a lot of at-bats and he's getting the chance to play every day."

What really sets Phillips apart from other leadoff hitters, according to White Sox third baseman Robin Ventura, is the attitude he brings in addition to the productivity. "He's loud and there's a fire about him every day that's contagious," says Ventura.

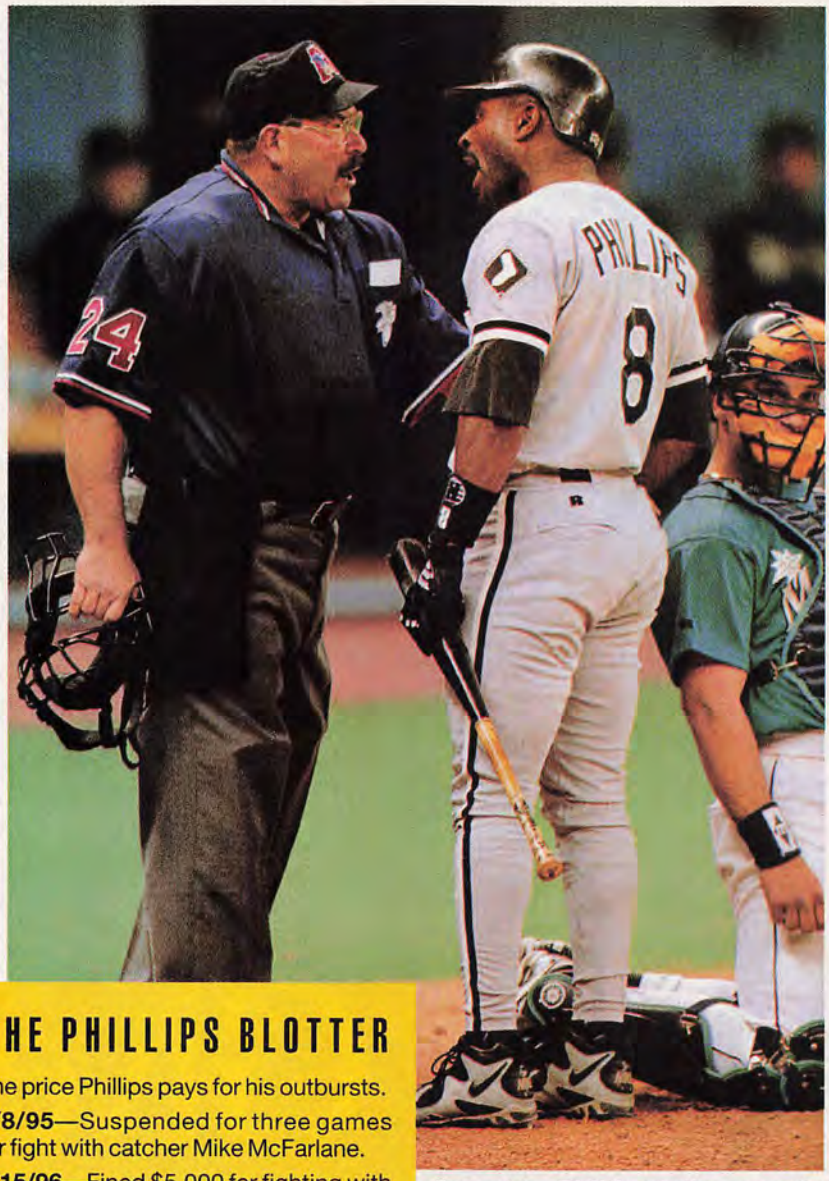
"I play with emotion, no question about it," says Phillips. "I don't know how to play any other way and I can't play any other way."

Sometimes Phillips' passion for winning can work against him though. Aside from being ejected from back-to-back games in Seattle, Phillips has been arrested for fighting with a fan and suspended for fighting with Boston Red Sox catcher Mike MacFarlane. "Whether it's the umpires or guys on the other team," explains Durham, "if there's an argument and somebody tries to push him around, and he thinks he's right, he's going to let you know about it."

An admitted hothead, Phillips brushes off these incidents as just part of his game. "I get ejected from three or four games a year," says Phillips. "That just comes with the territory."

And as long as White Sox territory is playoff land, Chicago management is willing to put up with Phillips' occasional outbursts. "I think if you had a guy who was going to be thrown out of 10 or 15 games, it would be a concern," says White Sox manager Terry Bevington. "But if you say, 'Hey, Tony, you can't ever get thrown out of games,' he might never have played in the big leagues because one of the reasons he's been so successful here is the type of person he is—he's fiery, he's competitive. Had he not been that way, he probably wouldn't be playing this game today."

"Tony's a great guy," adds Bevington. "He's well-liked by the umpires. He's a high-strung, emotional guy, and when you're like that, you're going to get into some jams. But they're not big jams. Tony Phillips is very much under control. People may think he looks out of control, but it's more like a controlled flame." ★



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Arguably, Phillips is the game's most valuable leadoff hitter.

THE PHILLIPS BLOTTER

The price Phillips pays for his outbursts.

8/8/95—Suspended for three games for fight with catcher Mike McFarlane.

5/15/96—Fined $5,000 for fighting with heckler from stands in Milwaukee.

6/15/96—Ejected for slamming bat after called third strike.

6/16/96—Ejected for arguing with umpire.

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America's Truck Stop

The New Dodge

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motor sports

OVER THERE

AMERICANS INVADE LE MANS

BY RICK VOEGELIN

It may have been the greatest influx of American men and machines into Europe since D-Day. The 64th running of the 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance race in Le Mans, France, saw a car from Indiana and a driver from Chicago win the most prestigious event in international motor racing. It was a great day to be a Yank.

Like World Cup soccer and Australian football, the 24 Hours of Le Mans scarcely registers on the American public's radar screen. But for the rest of the civilized world, the twice-around-the-clock endurance test at the Circuit de la Sarthe is a certified Big Deal—as revered as the Indy 500, as lavish as the Monaco Grand Prix. With drivers and teams from around the globe, the 24 Hours of Le Mans is the Olympics of auto racing.

The Le Mans circuit lies 120 miles southwest of Paris in the Loire Valley, a pastoral neighborhood with postcard-perfect French villages and stunning 700-year-old chateaus. Anyone with a wheezing rent-a-car can drive the course, since most of the 8.5-mile track is composed of two-lane country roads that are open to the public except during the event.

The storied Mulsanne Straight, where cars routinely reach speeds of 200 mph, is literally the road to Mulsanne—a narrow band of asphalt bordered by restaurants, houses and trees that lie within 15 feet of the racing line. The sight would induce cardiac arrest in a typical American insurance underwriter, but the locals are obligingly blasé about the race cars that streak through their backyards.

The lure of Le Mans has long exerted an irresistible pull on Americans. In 1950, sportsman Briggs Cunningham undertook a futile attempt to win the French classic with a pair of Cadillac Coupe de Villes—one a rebodied aberration dubbed "Le Monstre" by the astonished French press. Various Corvettes have raced with mixed results at the Sarthe circuit, but Henry Ford II achieved considerable success for the Stars 'n' Stripes, winning four straight Le Mans titles in the '60s.

Anticipation for this year's 24-hour race was electric. The Yanks were back in force, with American-based teams from Chrysler, Oldsmobile, Callaway Corvette, Ferrari and Mazda on hand—along with marquee American drivers Mario Andretti and Danny Sullivan. Ferrari returned after a 23-year absence to take on the million-dollar BMW McLarens, while Porsche upped the ante with a pair of cost-no-object carbon-fiber masterpieces that vaguely resembled its venerable 911 production model.

Amazingly, the actual race did not disappoint. The lap times for the seven quickest qualifiers were within a second of each other, a tribute to the Byzantine rules that handicap cars according to their racing class, body style and engine.

While the identities of the winning drivers remained in doubt until the last lap, there was never a question about the winning manufacturer. Le Mans was a Porsche parade, as the topless Joest Racing Porsche-powered prototype—originally constructed by Tom Walkinshaw Racing in exotic Valparaiso, Ind.—successfully held off the factory's own GT1 panzers from Weissach.

American Davy Jones, runner-up two weeks earlier at the Indy 500, teamed with German Manuel Reuter and Austrian Alexander Wurz to drive the victorious TWR Porsche in an example of international cooperation that the United Nations would do well to emulate.

"We had no problems," Jones reported. "That's what you need to do to win a 24-hour race."

Sounds simple. But like pitching a perfect game or sinking a hole-in-one, winning the 24 Hours of Le Mans requires skill, stamina, preparation—and more than a little good fortune. ★

PHOTOS: RICK CHENET

Dodge Presents

sport quiz

win THE PIN

PIN SHOWN LARGER THAN ACTUAL SIZE

SPORT MAGAZINE

How's your sports IQ? The famous SPORT Quiz has been separating the savvy fan from the weekend wimp for decades. See how you do with these 13 questions. Then check the answers below for your score, and rate yourself as follows: **12-13 correct: Sports genius 9-11 correct: Good fan 6-8 correct: Working too hard 3-5 correct: To the showers 0-2 correct: Try knitting**

ANSWER THE SPORT STUMPER AND WIN A SPORT PIN. No matter how you do on this month's quiz, we'll send you a SPORT pin pictured above if you send us the correct answer to the SPORT Stumper given below. Send only your name and address to SPORT Quiz, 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048. Limit one per person, and all entries must be postmarked by Sept. 15, 1996.

1 This wide receiver (pictured) set an NFL record for receptions last season with 123. Name him.

2 Which NFL team yielded the fewest amount of points last season?

A. Dallas B. San Francisco
C. Pittsburgh D. Kansas City

3 One quarterback led the NFL in both interceptions thrown and sacks in '95. Name him.

4 Who was the last Heisman Trophy winner to be taken first overall in the NFL draft?

TOM DIPACE

5 Going into this season, Eddie Murray, already with 3,000 hits, was 21 homers shy of 500. Name the only two members of the 500-homer, 3,000-hit club.

6 Who was the last National League pitcher to strike out at least 300 batters?

A. Nolan Ryan B. Mike Scott
C. Dwight Gooden D. J.R. Richard

7 Which hurler last won pitching's Triple Crown—the single-season league leader in wins, ERA and strikeouts?

8 From 1961, when Roger Maris clubbed his record 61 home runs, through 1995, Willie Mays and George Foster shared the single-season homer record. How many did they hit?

9 Which one of the following has never won tennis' U.S. Open?

A. Andre Agassi B. Jim Courier
C. Monica Seles D. Gabriela Sabatini

10 How many majors has golfer John Daly won?

11 Who led NBA guards last season in field goal percentage?

A. Penny Hardaway B. Michael Jordan
C. Rod Strickland D. John Stockton

12 Name the three American League teams never to have appeared in a World Series.

13 Who was the last college basketball senior to be taken No. 1 overall in an NBA draft?

—Steve Gordon

STUMPER Who scored the millionth run in baseball history?

SEPT. '96 STUMPER ANSWER Walter Alston ("Name the only major-league manager to win the World Series with the same team, but in three different ballparks.")

THIS MONTH'S QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Herman Moore 2. D 3. Dave Krieg 4. Vinny Testaverde 5. Willie Mays and Hank Aaron 6. B (306 in '86) 7. Dwight Gooden (1985) 8. 52 9. B 10. 2 (1991 PGA, '95 British Open) 11. D 12. California Angels, Seattle Mariners and Texas Rangers 13. Larry Johnson

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GOLFING TRENDS

NOTES FROM THE TOUR

Marketing Price, a Predator and an Earth-moving Worm

The Price Is Wrong—Only months ago, Atrigon was ready to "change the face of golf" by giving Nick Price $2.5 million a year to tout its Blackhawk driver. But now that this clubmaker is dead in the water, a question mark hangs over Price's marketing clout—and his attractiveness to other companies. Mainly because he hasn't exactly set the golf world on fire recently, and having already been associated with another ailing company (Le Coq Sportif), Price is rapidly becoming known as golf's John Goodman, Roseanne's co-star who's been in numerous box-office flops. Price will get another deal, but industry sources say his market value to a clubmaker has fallen to the $500,000-$700,000 range. That would mean Price is taking quite a hit; he was reportedly offered $17 million for 10 years by Cobra a short time ago.

What's a Mere $772,500?—Though Arnold Schwarzenegger is hardly known for his golf prowess, America's strongman won't be throwing any of his woods into the nearest lake any time soon. Not after he scooped up John F. Kennedy's McGregor clubs at last spring's celebrated Sotheby's auction. He now faces the problem of where to store these clubs so that they're not *terminated* by a *predator*. McGregor, if this story had a Hollywood twist, would come to Arnie's rescue—or at least plug the company's connection to Camelot. But that's not in the offing. Too bad. It would seem a better plot line than "Last Action Hero."

Oops!—Wanting their course to be a Great White Shark, not a Great White Elephant, the principals behind the Greg Norman-designed Medalist Golf Club in Hobe Sound, Fla., like to talk about Nick Price and Ray Floyd being members. They're far less forthcoming when responding to reports that this 7,200-yard layout, which is only 1½ years old, is too tough a struggle for the regular members (the new initiation fee is $85,000). While the owners first denied that any work was going to be done on the course to make it more playable, the Medalist had to be closed down last June for what's now being called "a little tweaking," or softening. It's presumed that Greg got it right this second time around.

Red, Yellow, Purple, Orange...—Chicago Bulls cross-dresser and rebounder extraordinaire Dennis Rodman doesn't only move the Karl Malones and Charles Oakleys away from the backboard; the Worm also hops onto a tractor and moves dirt on golf-course sites, though he's not yet a talent in this mud-filled world. As one of his excavating sidekicks, Barry Rich, admits: "Dennis is still learning. He doesn't know how to final grade a course." Regardless, Rodman is still the shrewd operator. He's part owner of the increasingly profitable Dallas-based Rodman Excavation Company.

—Ed Kiersh

COURTESY PGA NATIONAL RESORT & SPA

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR GOLF GAME IN 4 EASY STEPS.

GOLFING TRENDS

Mark McCumber's Windy-Day Secrets

TOM DIPACE

When confronted with windy conditions, too many average golfers try to hit the ball harder. That's only self-defeating, for the more spin you put on the ball, the more it climbs into the wind.

You can swing aggressively, but when the wind is blowing in your face, instead of hitting that usual 7-iron from 150 yards out, take a 6-iron, choke down on it, and take a three-quarters backswing with a three-quarters follow-through.

In the setup, you also need to back the ball up about an inch in your stance. By shortening the swing and taking more club, the ball will come out lower with less spin, and that reduced spin gets the ball boring through the wind better.

That same principle applies in the deep rough. If you can get the ball spinning less with a three-quarters swing, a knuckleball comes out of that grass and sails farther because it has less backspin.

Too often, tour players all the way down to beginners get intimidated by the wind. They feel it's torture trying to fight it. What they instead should think is, "Let the wind be your friend." Don't fight it. In other words, if it's a right-to-left wind and you have a 7-iron to the green, don't try to cut it into the wind. Instead, let it ride the wind. Same if it's blustering left to right. Aim left of the green and let the wind carry the ball in.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Just don't expect to be as precise as you normally are. We tour players know that if you've got a pin cut close to a lake or bunker, you can't be as accurate in the wind. You have to play to the fat part of the green. That's the wise play, true course management that also means playing to the middle of fairways, not to the edges. This gives you much more room for error.

Another example of proper course management: When the pin is on the green's right edge and the wind is a hard right to left, you don't want to miss the green on the right. That's where you have no green to pitch to if you miss with your approach, and you must chip downwind. So favor missing to the open sides of the green, where you'll have the advantage of chipping back into the wind.

That wind will also affect your chipping. A player tends to rush the stroke because he wants to hit before the wind knocks him off balance. Take more time, widen your stance a little bit, and get a good firm base. Be deliberate. Don't rush shots, and get the ball onto the green quicker. Meaning, instead of landing it, say, 12 feet and letting it roll eight feet to the hole, land it four feet away and let it roll 16 feet.

Also, widen your stance when putting and make sure your foundation is solid. Downwind putts will play shorter, while putts into the wind will play longer. Just stay calm and low with your stroke while maintaining your normal rhythm.

A frequent winner in his native Florida, where the wind is known to cause havoc, Mark McCumber is the designer of the newly opened TPC at Heron Bay, the site of next year's Honda Classic.

MIKE KLEMME/GOLFOTO

WEST VIRGINIA

THE GREENBRIER

What a combination! Sam Snead teamed with Jack Nicklaus, the ghost of Thomas Jefferson, a Ryder Cup victory and a "top secret" bunker befitting James Bond.

All this plus three picture-postcard golf courses distinguish one of America's premier resorts, The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

Nestled in the Allegheny Mountains and borrowing features of several legendary Scottish golfing shrines, the Old White Course is 6,640 yards of pitch-'n'-run, linksland style play, mixed with tight fairways, seemingly eternal par-4's and volumes of history.

Snead started working as a pro here in 1936, and the severe doglegs zigging and zagging along Howard's Creek have since attracted presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and JFK, and a host of foreign dignitaries intent on mastering the undulating, postage-stamp greens.

Redesigned by Jack Nicklaus in 1979, the 6,681-yard Greenbrier Course is devilishly bunkered, features 15 holes with water, and demands several forced carries onto greens. Far less forgiving than the more open Lakeside Course, the Greenbrier 18 was host to the 1979 Ryder Cup and the 1994 Solheim Cup.

But this 6,500-acre National Historic Landmark, 250 miles southwest of Washington D.C., where Jefferson bathed in the mineral waters, is more than a five-star, five-diamond golfing mecca.

Epitomizing the Greenbrier's southern hospitality and its picturesque location far from the maddening crowd, there's that bunker built by Eisenhower during the Cold War, intended as a fallout shelter for congressmen. It serves as a reminder that this timeless resort is the ideal escape from a world exploding with stress.

(For information about the Greenbrier's golf packages and Sam Snead's Spring festival, call 800/624-6070 or 304/536-1110.)

—Ed Kiersh

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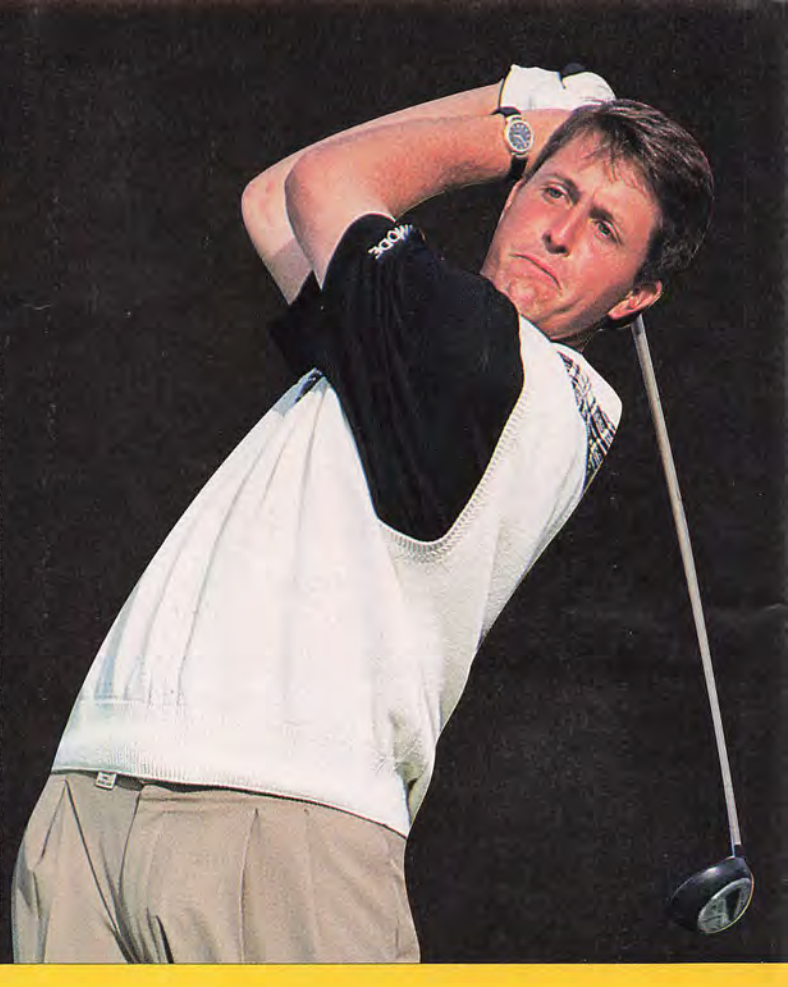
GOLFING TRENDS



Lefty is the future.

On the brink of Greg Norman star appeal and Jack Nicklaus domination, spirited southpaw Phil Mickelson already has shown all the right stuff to be a charismatic top gun. As his tour victories and clutch performance in the 1995 Ryder Cup suggest, this 26-year-old in stonewashed denims certainly is a dazzling talent.

Long off the tee and usually the dead-eye putter, Mickelson admittedly just "has to stay focused, be tougher, more mentally intense week to week," and the victories will come his way.

"Sure it sounds cool to be compared with Nicklaus, [Lee] Trevino and Norman, but I'm a little disappointed with my consistency level," concedes Mickelson, a four-time first team All-American from Arizona State University. "For me to win major championships, I need to pace myself better, get fired up more of the time."

But as America waits for this personable youngster to fulfill expectations of becoming the next dominator, Mickelson is not allowing golf to dominate his own life.

GREG BANNER

LYNX BLACK CAT TITANIUM DRIVER

Purring with owner-friendly attributes

Here's a traditional icon of ill luck sure to reverse your fortunes for the better on the golf course. The Lynx Black Cat Titanium driver not only paws its way to the top of the charts as far as today's quality titanium clubs go, but it follows in appropriately nimble fashion in the footprints of the company's relatively new Black Cat irons. Indeed, the products share some of the same innovative features and technology.

Mirroring the company's Black Cat irons, this titanium driver presents a patented "flare shaft" (meaning, as the name implies, a shaft that widens noticeably as it enters the clubhead itself), which increases the clubhead's stability at impact. This shaft, manufactured by Unifiber, weighs in at a svelte 65 grams, allowing golfers to generate a generous amount of clubhead speed for increased distance.

As with most species of titanium drivers, the Black Cat's clubhead measures a good deal larger than one cast from stainless steel. Benefits of the larger clubhead include a bigger sweet spot, increased stability and added confidence at address.

More than extra size, this pet purrs with a host of other owner-friendly attributes. For example, its multidirectional aerodynamic design reduces speed-slowing wind

Phil Mickelson

The Quiet Assassin/ By Ed Kiersh

While scoffing at the notion that he's a thrill seeker, true to his Tom Cruise take on life, he is looking for other high-flying challenges.

Striking a daredevil pose and showing a wittiness that's all too rare on the PGA Tour, he deadpans: "Skydiving has been a big asset to my career. I try to jump three to four times a week at home [in Scottsdale, Ariz.]. Just falling to the ground helps me think."

Laughing, he quickly admits: "I'm only kidding, I've never skydived. Yet I've recently gotten involved in flying, not to get my mind off golf, but my dad was an incredible pilot and we're always looking to have fun together. Being in command of a plane is really cool."

While already the "Best in the West," outdistancing the field in events in Arizona and California, Mickelson is still a novice in the cockpit. Graduating from a Cessna 172, he's now taking instrument training on a Dutchess, "a very slow plane that gives me lots of time to recover from my mistakes."

Owning a plane would be "kinda cool." But for the moment, in between his learning how to "make particular shots at Augusta," and "toning down my swing for U.S. Open courses," he's still unprepared to follow Greg Norman's aerial lead.

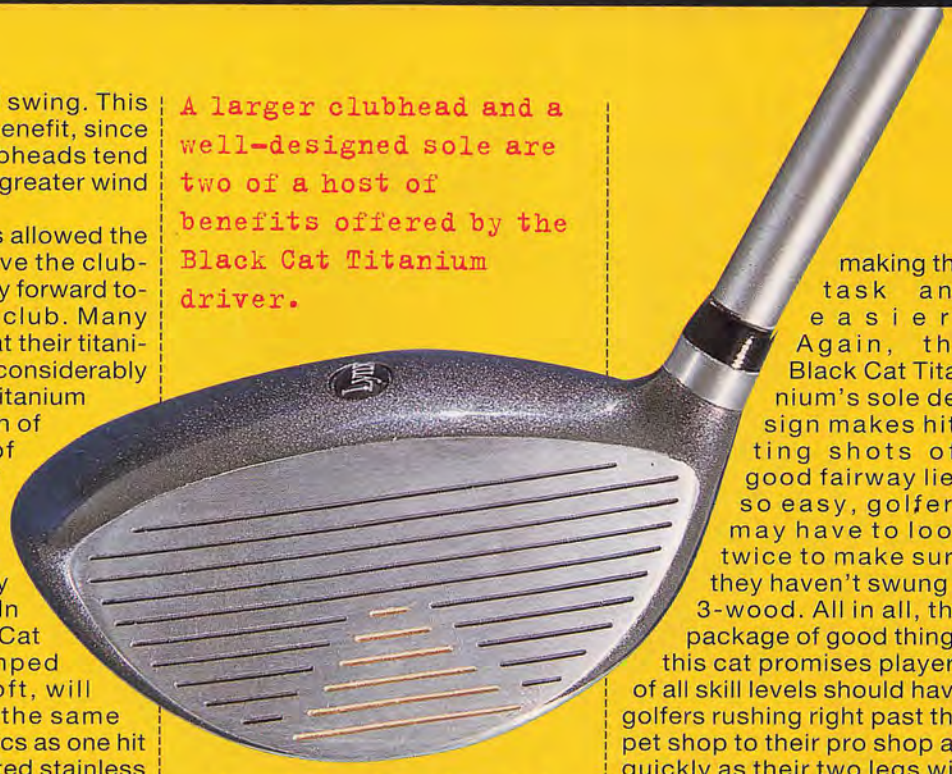
The Great White Shark flew over the Pacific last winter in an F-14 fighter jet, sitting behind the pilot in full-battle dress, and Mickelson says: "I'd love to take off and land on a carrier. I've tried to do it on simulator and it's really difficult."

A fierce competitor, Mickelson undoubtedly will stick that carrier one day. Just call him Tom Cruise, while as for that skydiving, he promises: "My dad has always wanted to do it, so I think we'll try it one day soon. There's a skydiving place close to my home where we'll have that adventure together."

drag during an actual swing. This represents no minor benefit, since the large titanium clubheads tend to lend themselves to greater wind drag.

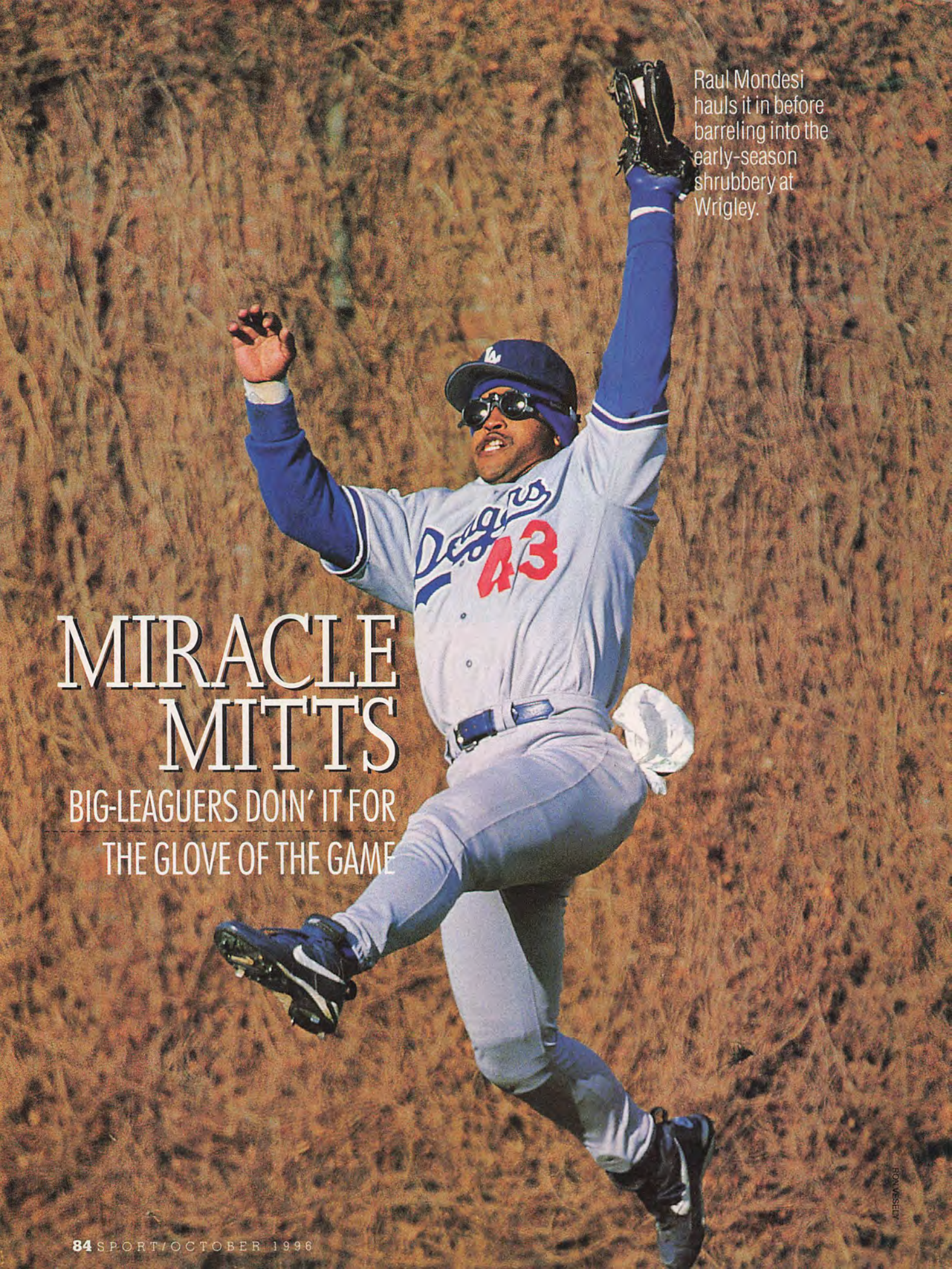
The design also has allowed the manufacturers to move the clubhead's center of gravity forward toward the face of the club. Many players have found that their titanium drivers hit the ball considerably higher than their non-titanium drivers. A combination of this forward center of gravity and a thicker clubhead face assists in producing shots launched at the trajectory indicated by the club's stated loft. In other words, a Black Cat Titanium driver stamped "10.5 degrees" of loft, will produce a shot with the same trajectory characteristics as one hit with a 10.5 degree-lofted stainless steel driver. While some golfers have complained about hitting the ball too high with their titanium drivers, these players will be pleasantly surprised by the Black Cat's more conventional flight pattern.

A larger clubhead and a well-designed sole are two of a host of benefits offered by the Black Cat Titanium driver.



Rounding out the driver's features is a well-designed sole. Hitting the driver off the fairway may represent the toughest shot in golf, and the large-headed titanium model drivers do not contribute to making the task any easier. Again, the Black Cat Titanium's sole design makes hitting shots off good fairway lies so easy, golfers may have to look twice to make sure they haven't swung a 3-wood. All in all, the package of good things this cat promises players of all skill levels should have golfers rushing right past the pet shop to their pro shop as quickly as their two legs will propel them.

(The Lynx Black Cat Titanium driver has a suggested retail price of $435. It comes in 9, 10.5 and 12 degree models.) *—Andy Brumer*

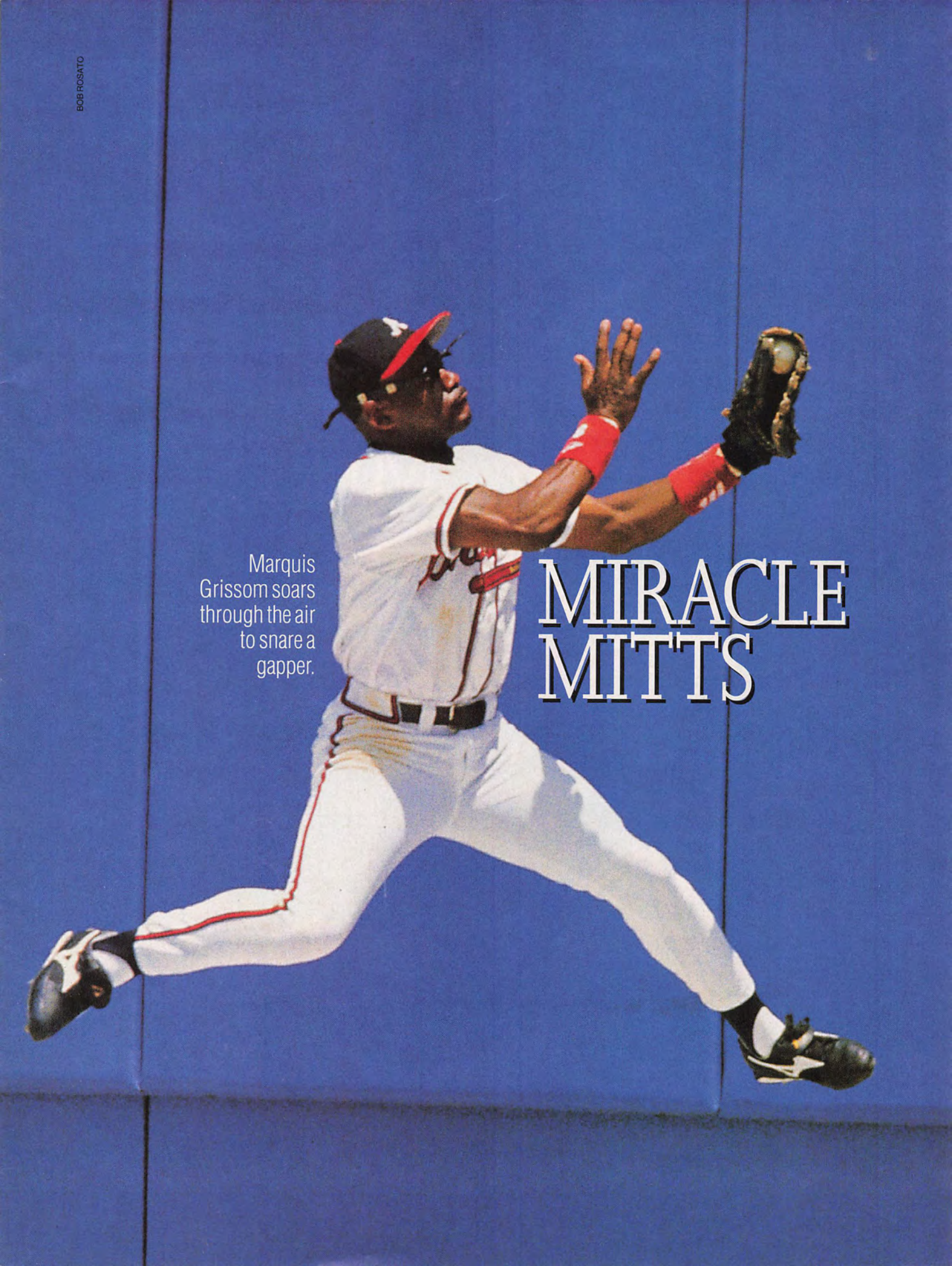


MIRACLE MITTS

BIG-LEAGUERS DOIN' IT FOR THE GLOVE OF THE GAME

Raul Mondesi hauls it in before barreling into the early-season shrubbery at Wrigley.

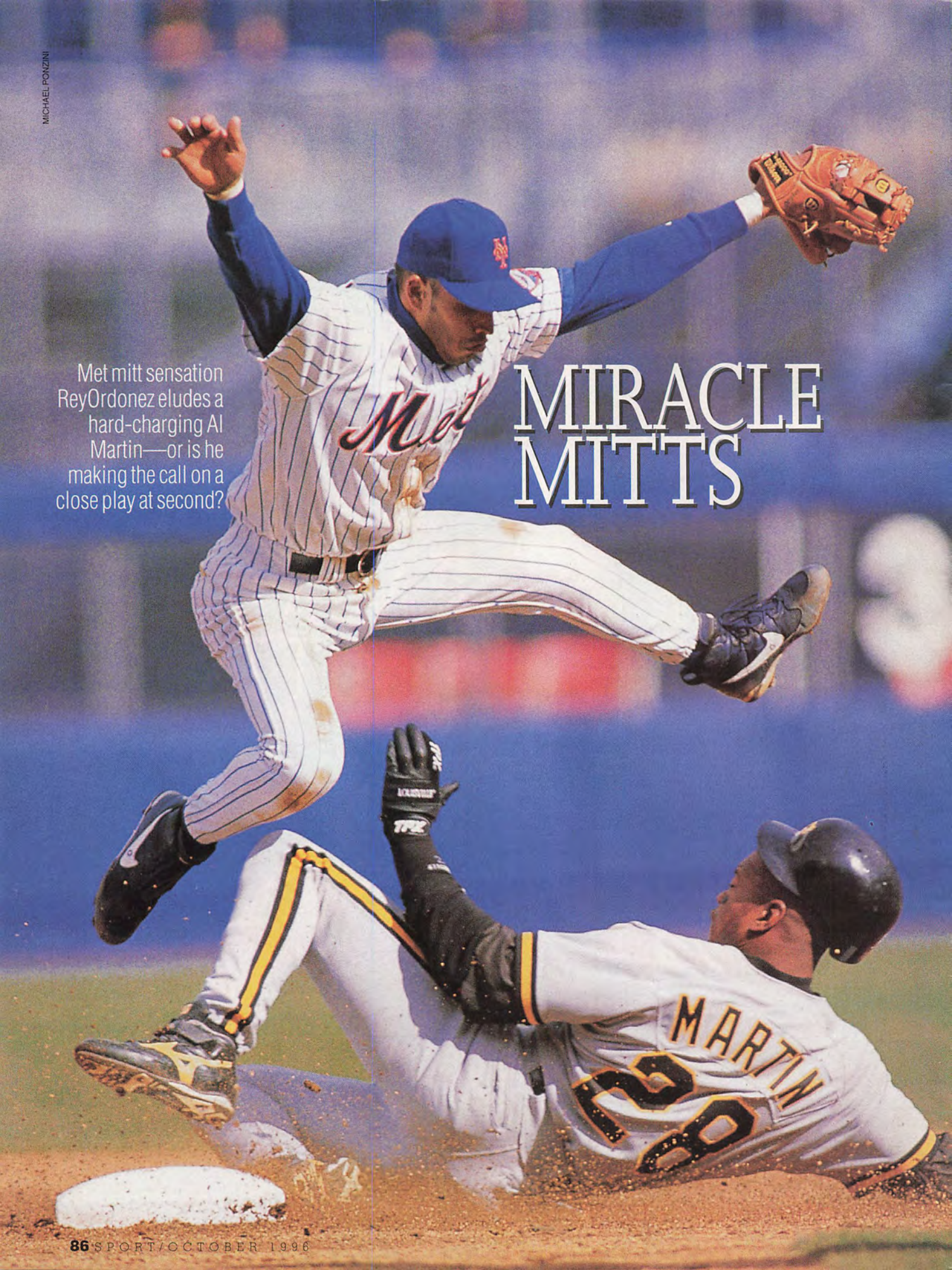
RON WISEY



BOB ROSATO

MIRACLE MITTS

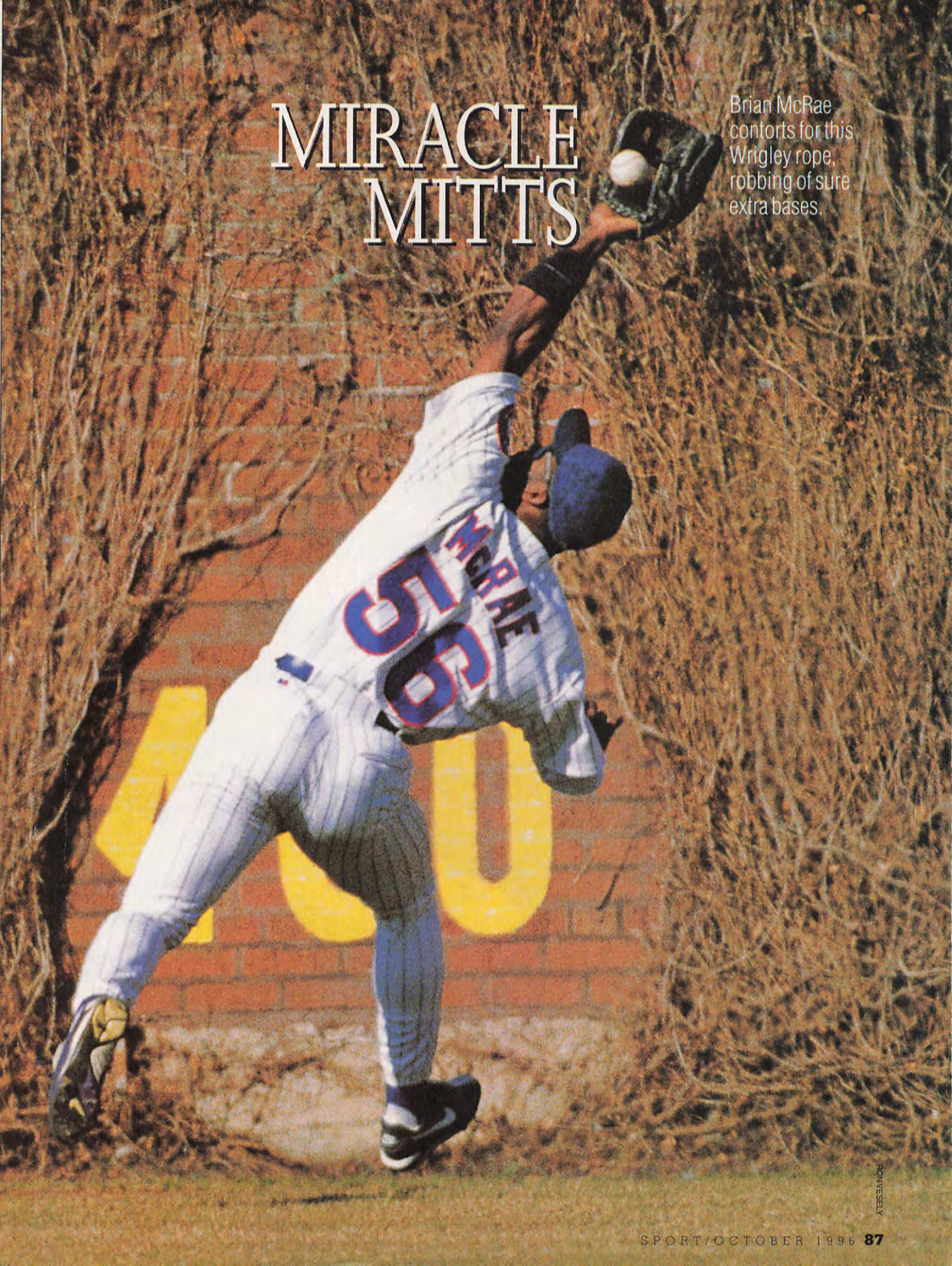
Marquis Grissom soars through the air to snare a gapper.



MIRACLE MITTS

Met mitt sensation ReyOrdonez eludes a hard-charging Al Martin—or is he making the call on a close play at second?

MIRACLE MITTS



Brian McRae contorts for this Wrigley rope, robbing of sure extra bases.

RON VESELY

MIRACLE MITTS

The 'Stros' Orlando Miller turns two the hard way, sidestepping San Diego's Steve Finley.

GREG BANNER

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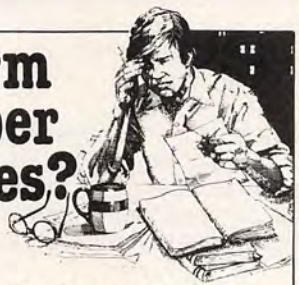

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sport facts

NOTEWORTHY NUMBERS AND STAT ODDITIES

By Dan Gordon

Average number of yards gained per season by all-time leading rusher Walter Payton over his 13-year NFL career: 1,287

Average number of yards per season for Thurman Thomas thus far in his eight-year career: 1,216

Yards per season for Barry Sanders in his seven-year career: 1,453

For Emmitt Smith in his six years: 1,493

Of the Dallas Cowboys' 16 regular-season games in 1996, number that will be nationally televised: 11

Number of teams that, by contrast, will play only one high-profile contest: 4 (Carolina, Houston, Jacksonville, Tampa Bay)

Nationally televised games on tap for the Oakland Raiders, coming off an 8-8 season: 7

Number of times the defending AFC champion Pittsburgh Steelers and 13-3 Kansas City Chiefs will appear, combined: 7

Number of games new Miami Dolphins coach Jimmy Johnson is looking forward to more than the Oct. 27 visit by Dallas: 0

Average number of 40-homer seasons in the majors from 1971 to 1992: 1.5

Average number of 120-RBI seasons from 1971 to 1992: 2

Number of times each feat was accomplished in 1993, the last time a 162-game schedule was completed—and a mark that may look feeble by the end of this season: 5

Major-league baseball teams that have won at least two-thirds of their games in a season: 10

Of those 10, number that won the World Series: 4 (1961 New York Yankees, 1970 Baltimore Orioles, 1975 Cincinnati Reds, 1986 New York Mets)

Number of times a pitcher had thrown a no-hitter before the Yankees' Dwight Gooden hurled his no-no last May: 217

Number of times a batter had hit for the cycle (single, double, triple and homer in a single game) before the St. Louis Cardinals' John Mabry accomplished the feat, also in May: 211

Number of Gold Glove awards held by soon-to-be-retired shortstop Ozzie Smith: 13

.300 seasons for Smith: 1

Montreal Expos' payroll, in dollars: 15 million

Major-league average: 40 million

Pitching coaches employed by the Boston Red Sox in the 13 months from Opening Day 1995 to last May: 5

Consecutive wins for the Nebraska Cornhuskers' football team entering the 1996 season: 25

Record number of consecutive wins: 47 (Oklahoma, 1953-57)

Most consecutive winning seasons: 34 (Nebraska, 1962-)

Winning percentage of head coach Tom Osborne, entering this season: .827

Number of coaches who have spent more than 16 seasons on the sidelines and amassed a better winning percentage than Osborne's: 0

Number of times in the last 50 years that Northwestern has appeared in the Rose Bowl: 2 (1949, 1996)

Number of times Southern Cal has appeared: 19

Number of baseball, basketball, football and hockey franchises with nicknames not ending in "s": 6 (Boston Red Sox, Chicago White Sox, Miami Heat, Orlando Magic, Utah Jazz, Tampa Bay Lightning) ★

INFOGRAPHICS: TREVOR JOHNSTON

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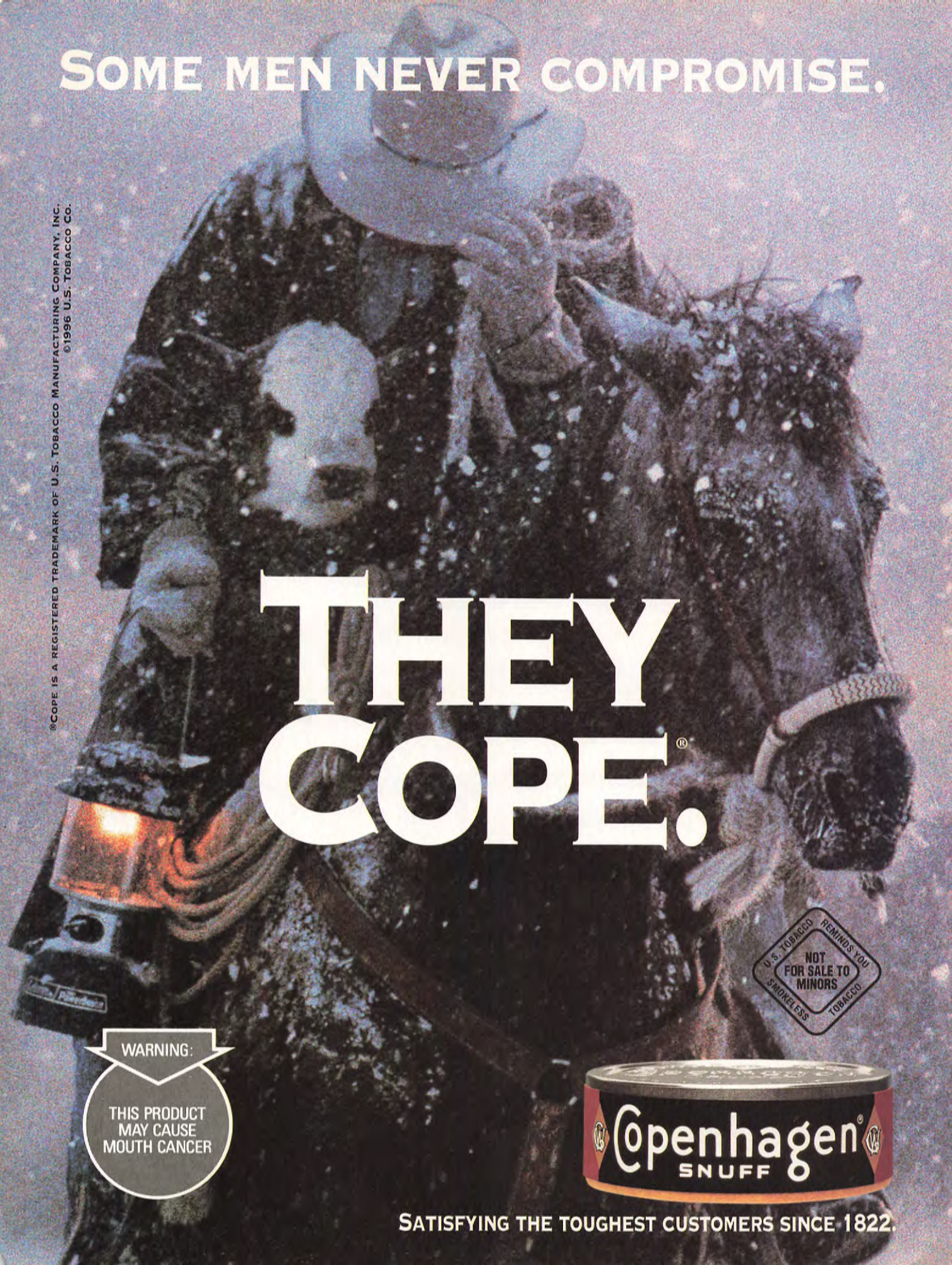
To enter, complete this official entry form and mail to: Skoal® Outfitters Sweepstakes, Suite 6200, 251 Main Street, Stamford, CT 06901-2928. Enter as often as you wish, but each entry must bear the name of only one entrant and must be mailed separately and received by January 7, 1997. All entries become the property of United States Tobacco Sales and Marketing Company Inc. ("USTSM"). Not responsible for lost, misdirected or late mail. No mechanically reproduced entries will be accepted.

There will be one (1) grand prize winner, nine (9) first prize winners, ninety (90) second prize winners, nine hundred (900) third prize winners and nine thousand (9,000) fourth prize winners, selected in a random drawing on March 15, 1997 by Custom Data Systems, Inc., an independent judging organization whose decision is final. By entering, all entrants and participants agree to be bound by these rules and the decision of the judges. The grand prize winner will receive a 10,000 bonus lid certificate good toward merchandise in the Outfitters Catalog plus an adventure trip for four (4). No substitution or transfer of prize by the winner is permitted. The trip must be taken in the Spring of 1997. The grand prize winner and three (3) additional participants will be flown from the major U.S. airport nearest the winner's hometown to Phoenix, Arizona where their adventure will begin. After spending 3 full days in Phoenix, they will be flown to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, for 2 days of Marlin fishing and other water-related activities. Finally, these four will head up to the Las Vegas area where they will have their choice of white water rafting through the Grand Canyon or skiing at Lake Tahoe for 5 days. USTSM reserves the right to substitute a prize (or any part thereof) of equivalent value. The grand prize includes coach airfare, transfers and hotel accommodations (double occupancy required). Equipment rental is included. Cost of meals and any costs not expressly provided for herein are the sole responsibility of the winner. Approximate retail value (ARV) of this prize is $24,000. The nine (9) first prize winners will each receive a 2,000 bonus lid certificate good toward merchandise in the Outfitters Catalog, ARV $400. The ninety (90) second prize winners will each receive a 500 bonus lid certificate good toward merchandise in the Outfitters Catalog, ARV $100. The nine hundred (900) third prize winners will each receive a 75 bonus lid certificate good toward merchandise in the Outfitters catalog, ARV $15. The nine thousand (9,000) fourth prize winners will each receive a 30 bonus lid certificate good toward merchandise in the Outfitters catalog, ARV $6.

All entrants and other participants must be legal residents of the U.S., 18 years or older at the time of entry. Employees of USTSM, it parents and affiliates, distributors, advertising or promotion agencies, fulfillment vendors and their families are not eligible. Void in Puerto Rico, Michigan and where prohibited by law or regulation. All federal, state and local taxes apply and are the sole responsibility of the winners.

Odds of winning are determined by the total number of entries received. Winners will be notified by mail. Winners and each participant will be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility to release USTSM and its affiliates, employees and agents from any liability related to or arising out of this promotion or the prize awarded, and to provide all necessary information to comply with all government regulations or prize may be forfeited. By accepting prize, winner and each participant consent to the use of his/her name and likeness for promotional purposes without further compensation.

For name of grand prize winner, send a self-addressed, stamped #10 envelope to: Skoal® Outfitters Sweepstakes, Suite 6200, 251 Main Street, Stamford, CT 06901-2928 by January 31, 1997.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